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THESIS

THE RISE AND INFLUENCE OF THIRD PARTIES IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865

by

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Chapter I

THE NATURE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

In General

Upon a recent day when a new governor was being formally admitted to office in our Commonwealth it was remarked to me that a great difference exists between the manner of the change in administrations in this country and the fashion in which a power is overthrown and the new authority established in some other lands. Cannons boomed but they did so harmlessly and merely to emphasize the commencement of a new term by a recently elected chief executive. There was a change in government, a modification desired and made effective by the people, a transfer by means of which a different political party was brought into control and power.

In a country, such as ours, where there is to be found a democratic form of government, the political party as an agency of a certain faction or group of the people is found to exist concomitantly. The power to govern being left to the people to exercise absolutely or in an indirect manner, there has resulted the formation of large and strong organizations which endeavor to determine and control the policies and principles which are to govern in the conduct of the particular territory. These bodies we find in all democratic regions whether they be cities, states or countries. "Party

organizations are necessary in a democracy".[1] The political party in the United States is now regarded as a public or governmental agency subject to legal regulation and control. According to the definition given to us by Burke, a party is "a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest upon some principle on which they are all agreed." This is considered a classic description of a political party providing us with as definite and at the same time as flexible an idea of the basic principles of a true party as can be found.[2] But even this statement by Burke does not closely describe what the political party in America really is. More properly descriptive of the party as it is found in the United States is the definition of Dr. Herring. He says, "A party is a durable organization which in its simplist form consists of a single group of citizens united by common principles or policies, but in its more complex form of two or more such groups held together by the desire for more power and, contrary to the common belief, actuated by the interests not of the whole nation but of a part."

Although it is not more easily defined it has a number of recognized characteristics which have made it

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[1] Mathews, J. M. -- American State Government -- Page 88

[2] Woodburn, J. A. -- Political Parties and Party Problems in the United States Chapter XXV

effective in the history of our nation. It is first of all an organization. As such there necessarily must be a recognized leader at its head, acceptable to at least a majority of its members, who is striving at all times for unity and co-operation. Besides this leader there must also be a number of able subordinates just as in any other soundly-established body. In short it is a government within a government. Its work is to define and set forth the views of its members, even though there may be many varieties of views within its ranks, and to prepare and present a platform favorable enough to attract sufficient support for obtaining the control of the region. It is the work of the party to strive for harmony and loyalty, reconcile all to the one form of action, seek new supporters, place before the voters candidates for the various public offices and to secure their election. All of this presupposes a high form of organization, and it is equally obvious that the party with the most highly developed system is to be the most successful. Despite its usually permanent fundamental policies the party is constantly changing in numbers for the better adapted it is to receive new members the more successful and powerful it will become. If it were to remain stagnant its life would most certainly be short. However, there must be a certain degree of permanence, for it takes time to place before the people its doctrines and to secure the election of its chosen candidates as well as to incorporate into the local, state, or national government its

principles.[3]

The political party is united by common general principle for it is readily seen that if the principles of the members of an organization differ there exists not one unit but just as many as there are platforms. The principles are the end striven for and differ from the policies inasmuch as the policies are merely the means to that end.[4] The ideal party seeks the advancement of all classes in the nation but we know from experience that no such ideal party exists. Nor do I feel that it is possible to have such a party. Man was created to think for himself and has his own idea as to what is best for him. Consequently there exists in the world a wide divergence of opinion. It is more than one party can do, therefore, to satisfy all. If the opposite were true and there existed a permanent era of good feeling, the time would be short indeed until all would cease to think and until oblivion would envelope us. The definition of a political party then presupposes the existance of more than one. It is an organization of individuals or groups, changing in numbers, having a note of permanence, united by common principles, seeking to control the government.[5]

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[3] Ray, P. O. -- Introduction to Political Parties and Practical Politics -- Page 9.

[4] Morse "What is a Party?" -- Political Science Quarterly -- March, 1896

[5] Ibid

Thus we find from the very earliest days of the United States Government, a form of popular sovereignty, the presence of political parties. Indeed one authority states the nature of our government as government by party, and quotes the remark of Mr. Bryce to the effect that in America the government goes for less than in Europe and that the parties count for more.[6] In answer to his own question, "What constitutes a party?" Bryce replies and shows that in America a simple test will be sufficient to guide one in his judgment. "Any section of men who nominate candidates of their own for the presidency and vice-presidency of the United States are deemed a national party."[7]

Beginning with the Federal and Anti-Federal Parties of the earliest days of the Union we find a multitude of political associations, each naturally and readily formed for the purpose of establishing the views of a particular group of people. It has always been so. Even before the year 1865, which I have chosen as the approximate starting point of my work, we find besides the two parties mentioned above, the Republican party, the National-Republican, the Whigs, Liberty, and Democratic organizations, the Free-Soilers and the Know-Nothings. All of these possessed at least temporary power, and, although some were but slightly different from others,

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[6]Woodburn, J. A. Op. Cit. Page 3.

[7]Bryce, James -- The American Commonwealth -- Vol. II -- Chapters LV and LVI

still each maintained a peculiar political opinion sufficiently attractive to gain national prominence.

Resuming our course through the administration of James Buchanan, the end of whose administration brings us to the first period of this thesis, we need merely to enumerate some further factions or groups which attained the size of nation-wide parties. Here we find the Northern Democrats and the Southern Democrats, the Constitutional Union, the Greenback, Prohibition, Greenback-Labor, the United Labor, the Union Labor, and the Equal Rights parties. Also can we include the Peoples Party and the Silver Democrats as distinguished from the Gold Democrats. All of these besides the Progressives, the Socialists, and the Socialist-Labor Parties and the more recent Farm-Labor group give some idea of the very many parties into which our people have divided themselves at various times and for very definite purposes.

Of these many parties two groups have enjoyed the loyalty and continued support of more than a majority of our electorate. So constant and powerful have these bodies become that they have gained the term "major parties". Although modified within themselves during the life of our nation, they have in substance determined a difference in the political opinions of the voters of our country and have resulted in the establishment of the so-called bi-party system. "Americans have generally accepted the two party system."[8]

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[8]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 241

Third Parties

It is notable that the two-party system has survived and flourished in the United States. However there have been certain forces which have been materially instrumental in the preservation of this dual order. By their warnings, given sometimes moderately and sometimes more strongly, they have aroused either or both of the major parties to awaken themselves and to respect and deserve the good will of the electorate. These forces, in the shape of third parties have promised assistance to the people or defeat to an erring party and by their presence and growth they have helped substantially to guarantee government by the people.

This is the subject-matter of our work, and it is my intention and purpose to ascertain and evaluate to such a degree as it may be practically done the rise and influence of these movements towards the organization of third parties upon different occasions during the period of the reconstruction and growth of our nation. Looking back hastily over the past sixty-five years we shall observe and investigate the development of these groups, strong, powerful bodies, staunchly launched and ably directed. Such well organized movements certainly had some vital bearing upon the policies of the country. In speaking of this influence we must remember that its effect was usually brought about in an indirect manner.

It has been pointed out by Holcombe[9] that from 1860 to the election of 1920 there have been but two elections at which as many as ten per cent of the voters who attended the polls have refused to support the candidate of one or the other of the two great parties. So at the outset we do not go forth to learn of parties which have successfully and permanently defeated one of the two major parties substituting themselves for the defeated group. All the valuable results are to be found to have been indirect. We are going to see how a minor party has grasped an ideal or a new and popular policy. We shall watch the interest in the ideal grow as its popularity spreads. The unwilling attitude and the opposition of the major parties will be noted and weighed. Finally we shall see the results accomplished by such minor parties as have been able to contest with the opposition. But we must remember and expect to find indirect though praiseworthy effects, usually witnessing the ideal of the minor party adopted by one or both of the major parties or realignment of the major parties. As the number of votes cast for a third party grows there goes with this increase the greater assurance that its issue will be adopted by one or both of the greater parties. This has occurred frequently since 1865 in our country and concerning it Haynes[10]

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[9] Holcombe, A. N. -- The Political Parties of Today -- Pages 314-340

[10] Haynes, F. E. -- Third Party Movements since The Civil War -- Page 3

has said that it is a truism of political history that minority parties ultimately write the platforms for all parties.

Chapter II

THE COUNTRY'S CONDITION IN 1865

The affairs of this country were in a chaotic condition after the Civil War. In the South, which had been the scene of the fighting, an appalling state of affairs existed. Destruction was rife everywhere and the havoc wrought was almost indescribable. Sherman for example in his celebrated march to the sea through Georgia destroyed and pillaged everything as he went. He, himself, estimated the damage done in the State of Georgia alone at $100,000,000[1]. In addition to the damage done to land and property, the youth of the South, its best men and most promising leaders, was practically gone.

When the richest legacy which the South possessed, the slave, was taken away another problem arose. These people, unused to their newly gotten freedom and for the most part ignorant and unused to supporting themselves, wandered about the country in droves ekeing out an existence as best they could. The planter aristocracy of the South was practically wiped out, and the large plantations and landed estates were beginning to disappear. Before the Civil War this powerful agricultural group and the southern Democrats who, in the main were engaged in agricultural activities were largely

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[1]Bassett, J. S. -- A Short History of the United States -- Page 539

represented in the government of the country. The supremacy which they had enjoyed during the early days was never regained after 1865 and the cause is to be found, not so much in the handicaps imposed upon the agricultural districts of the South after the war, as in the tremendous advances which were occurring in the field of industry as compared to that of agriculture.[2] Thus it was that the South emerged from a fruitless war in a hopeless state and to find that the pursuit upon which it could depend for recovery was rapidly diminishing in value and extent. Unlike the North which had become a highly industrialized section as a result of the war and which had been practically untouched in the way of destruction, the South suffered untold losses. The Greenbacks which had been issued during the war in large quantities had no specie behind them and had decreased in value so that they were in 1873 worth only about one quarter of their original value. In addition to this the money issued by the Confederate States had been repudiated and the South was financially bankrupt. Practically all of the farmers of the South were in the habit of raising only one crop of either cotton or tobacco and they usually turned it into cash readily. During the war the Southerners could not sell to England, their best customer, nor could they sell to the people of the North with whom they were at war. The

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[2] Boothe, V. B. -- The Political Party as a Social Process -- Page 49

result, then, was a panic because of the one crop system. And what a great change had come over the South as it emerged from the disastrous conflict. Nowhere had so many men done so well as the larger cotton planters of the Lower South were doing in the 1850's. "It was a period of unprecedented prosperity in the United States.[3]"

In the North conditions were somewhat better. Industry had boomed and the growth of munition and clothing factories marked the beginning of mass production in this country. The most serious problems which the Unionist had to face were social, namely, the loss of life, and the care of the returned service men. Such was the general condition of the country when the unfortunate Johnson succeeded the great and lamented Lincoln. No doubt but that Andrew Johnson suffered greatly because he followed so great a man as the martyred Lincoln, but his efforts to bring order out of the chaos were heroic. His desire to continue the policy of amnesty as begun by his predecessor met with extremely harsh opposition on the part of the Radicals in Congress. Briefly, Johnson's plan was to re-establish the South under the Constitution by raising the blockade; also by establishing means for the collection of taxes, the delivery of mail and administering the courts of law. He appointed a provisional governor in each state who called a convention

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[3]Holcombe, A. N. - Op. Cit - Page 142

of delegates chosen by eligible whites. The conventions repealed the ordinances of secession, repudiated the debts of the Confederacy, and ratified the Thirteenth Amendment. This was in accord with the claims of Johnson[4] who had the honesty and patriotism of Lincoln but who lacked the tact, wisdom, and magnanimity of the great Emancipator. But Congress, led by such men as Sumner and Stevens, ignored the plan of the President and, fearing the return to slavery, passed a much more drastic Reconstruction Act (1867). It had previously passed the Fourteenth Amendment and the Act of 1867 provided that; (1) The seceding states should be divided into five military districts; (2) the states, under military supervision, should hold conventions to form state constitutions; (3) negroes should have a right to vote for delegates, and to be delegates to these conventions; and (4) the state should be readmitted to representation in Congress, provided that the constitution thus presented was approved by the people of the state and provided that the state legislature did ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. This was the plan that was finally carried out, and six states were readmitted in 1868 and the remaining states by 1870. Thus we commence our study of third party movements just at that period in history when the strength and unity of our nation was being severely tried. The year 1865 is set down roughly, however, and in discussing the formation

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[4] Knowlton, D. C. -- Pupils' Outlines for Home Study -- United States History -- Part II

of groups which were to develop and become instrumental in the conduct of the Union it shall probably become necessary to antedate this year somewhat in order to include the earliest sources.

Chapter III

THE LIBERAL REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT

When Ulysses S. Grant was chosen President in 1868 by an electoral vote of 214 to that of 80 for Seymour, the popular vote was much closer than what might be indicated by these figures, Grant's majority being only 750,000. Doubtless Grant saw and realized the closeness of the vote in a number of the states, but he understood his election to be an endorsement of the Reconstruction Act but recently passed by Congress. Accordingly he yielded to the radical measures prescribed for the reclaiming of the South. This was directly contrary to his attitude of 1865 when he wrote to President Johnson expressing himself in favor of peace.[1]

The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments had given the negro his freedom and his citizenship respectively and in 1869 the Fifteenth Amendment was passed making the former slave a voter. The logical result was that an illiterate and ignorant class became an important factor in the government of the South. This, accompanied by the disenfranchisement of thousands of whites for the part they had taken to further the cause of the confederacy, accounted for the condition of affairs where negroes held high official positions.

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[1]Rhodes, J. F. -- History of the United States
Vol. V -- Page 645

Grant, although personally honest and sincere, surrounded himself with men possessing none of his fine qualities. The corrupt practices of politicians as well as the radical policies of the administration with respect to the South engendered much bitter feeling among the more liberal element within the Republican Party.

The rise of the organization which became known as the Liberal Republican Party of 1872, although its actual birth antedated this time, constituted a protest against this corruption in the administration of the National Government. Its leaders numbered Charles Sumner, Charles Francis Adams, Horace Greeley, Murat Halstead, Chauncey M. Depew and many others of national fame. The leaders and followers of the Liberal Republican Party stood for "reform", and "anything to beat Grant,"[2] pledging themselves to; equality before the law, the union of the States; the war amendments, and to the removal of all Southern political disabilities; to local self-government with impartial suffrage, and to a thorough reform of the Civil Service. These were the most important principles of their platform, and they represented an effort upon the part of the reform faction within the Republican Party to change the policy of the government with reference to Southern reconstruction and the general administration of the government.[3] Appointments to official positions were now in the hands of greedy politicians in the

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[2]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 250

[3]Booth, V. B. -- Op. Cit. -- Pages 81-82

various districts and corruption in doling out these positions was widespread. The failure of Grant to see the evils of this, together with his inability to express himself in favor of a reform in the civil service, only tended to increase the dissension throughout the country. There was also a demand on the part of this liberal element for a reform of the tariff and this plan in the platform of these bolters is most important. Their inclusion of a recommendation for tariff reduction together with the later and inconsistent nomination of Horace Greeley, an extreme protectionist, was a vital cause of the party's failure.[4]

The first rumblings of a revolt were heard in 1870 in Missouri that border State whose unique experience during and after the Civil War may be said to epitomize in a remarkable manner the experience of the nation as a whole in its dealing with secession, slavery, and reconstruction.[5] Attempts to re-enact a law which deprived Southern sympathizers of the franchise was unsuccessful and caused a split of the Republican Party into two factions known as Liberals and Radicals. In the election which followed the Liberal candidate for Governor was elected and the Liberal organization secured control of the State. The movement spread

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[4]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 15

[5]Macy, J. -- Party Organization and Machinery -- Pages 178-180

with rapidity all through the country and with a goodly portion of the press on their side the Liberal Republican Party held a National Convention at Cincinnati in May, 1872, and there chose Horace Greeley and B. Gratz Brown as their candidates for President and Vice-President respectively. The Democratic Party agreed to align itself with the Liberal Republicans. A study of the workings of the practical politicians at this convention clearly discloses the transfer of the meeting from the hands of the patriotic and well-intentioned sponsors to the control of the former.

The choice of Greeley was a serious mistake. We have seen that he, an extreme protectionist, was set up as the leader of those who advocated a lower tariff. They also, as supporters of a civil service reform program, had chosen a man more unfriendly to their demand than President Grant himself. The Republicans were not slow to take advantage of this ludicrous state of affairs. The campaign was not efficiently organized, although as the election day approached the success of the Liberals appeared to become more hopeful. However, it was no surprise when the Radical Republicans with Grant again as their leader swept the country. Thus was the opportunity lost by reason of stupid management at the convention, and a fairly reasonable chance for victory was turned to inglorious defeat. In twenty-one Northern and Western States the Radical or regular Republicans polled 57 per cent of the popular vote. In the sixteen Southern States (including the Upper and Lower South) this same party polled

over 53 per cent of the votes, the largest majority which the Republicans had ever polled up to that time.[6] This assured the party of a long and secure period of political successes.

With the defeat of 1872 the Liberal Republican Movement did not die out immediately but spasmodic traces of it appeared and reappeared throughout the country during the next four years and by virtue of an alliance with the Democrats it enjoyed varied success.

In 1873 in Ohio a Democratic-Liberal ticket was unsuccessful. In 1874 in Connecticut and Massachusetts they succeeded in electing high state officials. In the same year in New York although they did not formally choose a ticket they urged that the people support only men pledged to reform in keeping with the principles of Liberalism. Their national body, poorly organized as it had been, had but a nominal existence. Particularly in the South do we find that what remained of the Liberal organization was soon merged with one or the other of the older parties. The balance of the number went to constitute a group of independents who had no fixed party allegiance and who gained the name of Mugwumps, which term has come to include all independents who act on the principle of going from one party to the other according as

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[6]Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 184

they like or dislike the candidate put forward. This name, first given in derision came to be accepted as a respectable title.

As the election of 1876 approached the Liberal Republican began to become active throughout the country but when it became apparent that such men as Tilden and Hayes would be chosen as nominees by the two major parties they held no national convention. Both men were acceptable and judged as capable, and Hayes in particular found no opposition from the Liberal element. Allen, the Chairman of the Liberal Republican National Committee, stated in a letter to the New York Tribune that both Hayes and Wheeler should be endorsed in the name of the Liberal Republicans of America. In addition he took occasion to emphasize that the opposition had never been against the Republican Party of which they were a part, but rather against those who had control of its destiny. The Liberals continued their alliances with the Democrats in various sections of the Country, but as a National Movement they ceased to exist after 1876. The real purposes of their original organization had been accomplished when Hayes was elected president for he was a reformer in spirit and his attitude towards the South was that which would have satisfied the Missouri Liberals in 1870. The important motive of this third party, namely, reform within its own ranks was both worthy and profitable. In 1880 at the Republican Convention the Liberal element was

instrumental in defeating the nomination of both Grant and J. G. Blaine and in obtaining the nomination of Garfield. Again in 1884 their ideals were held forth and respected when they bolted from the Republican Party and came to the support of Cleveland and the Democrats. Thus they endeavored to purge their own political associates of corruption, and they provided the Democratic Party with many advantages. This latter party by its acceptance of these issues strengthened itself and placed itself in the field as an active competitor of the Republicans.

Chapter IV

THE GRANGER MOVEMENT

The so-called Farmers' Movement was primarily an economic one which grew out of a condition or set of conditions existing in the states of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota which collectively have been described as the "garden-spot of the country."[1] Known by different names in the various States and with origins of different natures, the groups of farmers in the several states were welded into a body which effected legislation and provided government regulations in their behalf. In Minnesota it was known as the Anti-Monopoly Party, while in Wisconsin it was called the Reform Party. Originating in the State of Washington as the "Patrons of Husbandry", we find spreading throughout these wheat-producing and corn producing States strong associations of farmers commonly termed "granges". For this reason we frequently call the Farmers' Movement by the name of Grange Movement. Originally the founders of the Grange had in mind certain social and political benefits to its members. By 1872 it was clear that the financial advantage could be made a more attractive incentive for prospective members. Because of this, two functions came to be part of the work of these

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[1]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 51

organizations; namely, (1) an effort to secure cheaper transportation; (2) the introduction of all kinds of co-operative schemes in purchasing supplies, marketing products, obtaining insurance, and even in the manufacture of agricultural implements.[2]

The rise of manufacturing in the New England and Middle Atlantic States resulted in a natural decrease in farms there so that by 1870 agriculture was in the main purely Western and Southern. The great wheat and corn producing States were Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota; the Southern States remaining, as they had before the war, the producers of the cotton and tobacco crops.

The great increase in the manufacture of farm implements in this country as well as the great influx of immigrants to the Western States from Europe resulted in correspondingly large increases in the commodities of those states. The result was that they were producing more than was required for local consumption. Hence were they forced to seek additional markets.

The gain in the construction of railroads, which had been rapid during the fifties and had retarded somewhat during the war, was not apace with the increase shown by the producing farmers. The necessary facilities for transportation,

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[2]Boothe, V. B. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 62

therefore, could not be provided and the result was that the farmer found his crops accumulating and the railroads unable to handle them. The increase in railroad rates as required by the eastern and foreign speculators who had invested their capital in the new means of transportation was regarded by the farmer as unjust. On top of this hardship we see the coming of the middle-man with whom the farmer was forced to deal and from whom the westerner did not get a fair return for his product.

Besides these difficulities with which the farmer had to contend we also must include the great power of manufacturing and industry which was growing very rapidly. With the decrease of agriculture in the New England and Middle Atlantic farms, of which we have already made mention, we saw the growth of the industrial interests. It is a well known fact that the financial and industrial interests were in great favor with the government and that it was the governmental protection extended to these interests which irritated and chafed the agricultural population of the South and West during the period from 1869 to 1892.

Thus it was to be expected that the agricultural faction of our people should have been heard from. The experience gained by the farmers in their first attempts at grouping into Granges for the purpose of co-operation now gave impetus to the recognized need for the farmers to organize for the protection and preservation of their industry. The political side of the Grange movement now

began to function, although the organization was prohibited by its constitution from expressing itself upon matters of politics.

The grievances of all the farmers were in general the same and so they set about to organize. Beginning with the first attempt, in the State of Washington with the Patrons of Husbandry, the movement spread quickly. Its growth was phenomenal. The high water mark in the number of Granges was reached in 1875 when over 21,000 were in existence in forty-three states.[3] A year before this, at the seventh annual convention of the National Grange which met at St. Louis, there were present representatives from thirty-two States having jurisdiction over practically 500,000 members.

Thus the farmer organization was begun and it became a powerful faction, successful in promoting and securing helpful legislative action in many states. The platforms of all of those farmer associations, regardless of name, contained some demand for railroad regulation as their main plank. In all of the States with the exception of Indiana and Michigan, the platforms possessed planks requiring the subjection of corporations, especially railroad corporations, to the control of the state and quite a number of the states demanded regulation of all monopolies. Besides

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[3]Buck, S. J. -- The Granger Movement -- Pages 38-59

this plank there were others, some denouncing corruption in government, and others calling for economy and the reduction of taxation, and Civil Service reforms.

The farmer, who for the most part was inexperienced in law and politics, soon found out that the mere adoption of legislation was not sufficient to assure him of those conditions which must be his before he might operate successfully. He was forced to compete with the best legal talent in the country, and as a result he lost many cases in which the constitutionality of his proposed legislation was attacked. Thus we have the so-called "Granger Laws" held as unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court of Minnesota in 1872. In 1873 a similar court in the State of Illinois declared like legislation in that State to be unconstitutional. However, the question of the right of the states to regulate railroad charges finally went to the Supreme Court of the United States and the authority was upheld by this body. The decisions by the state supreme courts only served to arouse a more fiery attack on the part of the farmers. Now they entered into politics in earnest and by their votes they so secured the election of the executive, legislative, and judicial officers of the states that their desired measures were enacted and upheld.

Entering the political arena in a most active manner and determined to fight for issues which meant its livelihood and success, the Grange became in many states a power which

commanded recognition and consideration.[4] Its results were very real and definite. First of all, and, of course, indirectly we see its influence as impressed upon the major parties of the day. In practically every instance when a strong opposition party was formed within a state in favor of railroad rate regulation and farmer interests, the party in power, in an effort to maintain its control, was forced to insert a clause in its platform acknowledging the justice of the claim made by the reformer. So marked was this that the Middle Western States stand out as the first ones in which the railroad rate regulation or farmer interest found a place in a state campaign platform. Thus we often hear of the Granger States. In 1884 the matter of governmental control of railroads was put in the platform of the National Democratic Party. It was only a mild clause hitting at monopoly, but three years later, in 1887, we find the passage of the Interstate Commerce Act which had as one of its main purposes, the design to overcome some of the conditions which had been most unfavorable to the farmers. This law was the culmination of many investigations and attempts on the part of various committees to settle a problem which was brought to the attention of the country by the Farmers' Movement. Thus this result alone, a condition towards which these agricultural organizations contributed substantially, is a significant

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[4]Macy, J. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 248

product of the efforts of those settlers of the South and West.

In his work on the Third Parties in the West, Haynes concludes his treatment of the Granger Movement with a quotation from an editional which appeared in the Chicago Weekly Tribune. Among other things it is there stated, "It is idle to talk of the failure of a movement which has gained the political control of the States of Wisconsin and California, which has carried a majority of the counties of Illinois, and bids fair to carry the State at the next general election; - - - - - - - - - the main significance of the Farmers' Movement is that it offers to those who desire reform in public administration, and who have sought and failed to secure it in the old dividend-paying parties, an opportunity to accomplish something for the benefit of the country at large -- not for the farmers merely, but for all who live by their industry, as distinguished from those who live by politics, speculations, and class-legislation."[5]

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[5]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Pages 65 and 66

Chapter V

"GREENBACKERS"

During the Civil War the United States Government issued paper money in very large quantities. Four hundred and fifty million dollars worth of these notes or greenbacks were issued. They had been turned out by the government during the emergency, and had received no metallic backing. As such the authorities had intended that they be considered merely as "promises" to pay the particular amounts for which they were issued.[1] The depreciation in the value of the greenback as measured in gold in the New York market during the years 1862 to 1865 was from ninety-eight cents to sixty-eight cents, with a low mark of thirty-nine cents touched in July and August of 1864.[2] The depreciation during the following years was even greater, and it seems safe to say that at the time of the panic of 1873 they could hardly have been worth more than one quarter of their face value. The financial interests of the country, representing Eastern bankers and capitalists, realizing the dangers of such a condition of affairs, advocated the retirement of these notes. The Administration, equally fearful of the stated danger and

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[1]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 136

[2]Dewey, D. R. -- Financial History of the U. S. Page 293

anxious to bring the country back to a specie basis, took steps to cancel the greenbacks and to issue interest-bearing gold bonds in their place.

The immediate result was the Act of March 12, 1866, allowing for the cancellation of $10,000,000 of the greenbacks within six months and $4,000,000 per month thereafter. By 1867 the operation of this bit of legislation reduced these notes to $356,000,000. It was then that those favoring the continued circulation of the greenbacks asserted their strength, and as a result of their efforts an Act was passed in February, 1868, forbidding their further retirement.

Following this date the actual number of greenbacks outstanding was increased so that by 1874 it amounted to $382,000,000. The depression of 1873 had increased and strengthened the claims of those who were advising the increase of the notes in question. When President Grant vetoed the "Inflation Bill" of 1874 and when the Resumption Act of 1875 was passed, the opposition against the decrease in greenbacks became most active. It subsequently resulted in the Act of May 31, 1878, by virtue of which the retirement or cancellation of legal-tender notes was forbidden.

This briefly constitutes the history of the conditions which gave rise to this vital issue and which resulted in the founding of the Greenback Movement.

"'Greenbackism' passed through two stages, the first, that of the National Labor Union, 1867-1872; the

second, that of the Greenback Labor Party, after 1873."[3]

Since 1865 the National Labor Congress, made up of delegates from the older industrial sections of the eastern part of the country, had been meeting, but it was not until 1870, at its Cincinnati assembly, that there was adopted a platform which denounced the intention of the Administration to restrict and retire the greenbacks. At a meeting of a similar group in Massachusetts the legal tender notes issued by the government were termed "the best and safest currency the government ever had."

At the 1871 Congress of the National Labor group there was announced a proposal to come forth as a distinct political party in the following year. This promise was made good, and in 1872 at Columbus, Ohio, we witness the the first national convention of the National Labor Reform Party. With delegates present from seventeen states, these agents of the laboring faction, aided by disgruntled and dissatisfied members from both of the major parties, adopted a platform which, among other planks, contained expressions of definite stands with respect to the labor question and matters pertaining to the type of money to be approved for circulation. Candidates were nominated for the presidency and the vice-presidency, but both nominees subsequently declined. At a second convention in New York, Charles O'Conor of New York, was named as the only nominee on the Labor ticket.

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[3] Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 92

The Labor Reformers, however, did not possess or exert any great national influence singly, and it was not until they united with the Greenback Party that they gained sufficient strength to make a country-wide impression. However, in the several Eastern states we find the organizations of the workers active in the political campaigns. Connecticut and Pennsylvania were scenes of their interests and efforts. Massachusetts particularly afforded them opportunity for campaigning in 1871, 1873, and 1875 and in this last named year we find the name of Wendell Phillips as their nominee for governor of the state. So in a rather sporadic fashion we see this third party functioning throughout the eastern section of the Union. They strengthened and wavered intermittently until about 1877 when at the time of the terrible railroad strikes which broke out in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illnois, Indiana, Missouri, and New Jersey, they reached the pinnacle of their power.

We have considered the birth and growth of the labor reform agitation with its resulting party movement. We have already stated that this group was but one of the two organizations which merged to form the Greenback Labor Party. Although it was actually 1877 before the two groups united formally, still their common interest in the monetary question had brought it about so that their influence and vote were similar for some years previous to this date. Thus it is usually recorded that their united strength began

to make itself felt by 1873.

Before considering the joining of these two factions and its consequences it will be well to consider for a few minutes the creation and spread of the straight Greenback Party.

This Greenback agitation had its beginning in the West and as such it represented the opinion of the farmers and agricultural interests of the country. Beginning under the direction of Geo. H. Pendleton, often called "Young Greenback", the promoters spread his "Ohio idea", which was to pay the principal of the government bonds in Greenbacks instead of in coin. The first nominating convention of the National Greenback Party gathered in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 17, 1876, and at it Peter Cooper of New York was named for President and Senator Newton Booth of California as Vice-President. The matter subsequently declined the nomination and in his place was named Samuel F. Carey of Ohio. Their platform was principally and purely a money platform, and in connection with their labors and efforts we see much space and emphasis given to the term "fiat-money". By this expression was meant that governments declare by their fiat what shall be money for their peoples. The chief purpose of their party was, of course, to save the Greenbacks from destruction, and at their first national meeting in 1876 of which we have already spoken, they included the following in their platform:

"We believe that a United States note, issued directly by the government and convertible on demand into United States obligations (bonds), bearing a rate of interest not exceeding 3.65 per cent per annum, and exchangeable for United States notes at par, will afford the best circulating medium ever devised. Such United States notes should be full legal tender for all purposes, except for the payment of such obligations as are, by existing contracts, especially made payable in coin; and we hold that it is the duty of the government to provide such a circulating medium, and insist in the language of Thomas Jefferson that bank paper must be suppressed and the circulation restored to whom it belongs. We earnestly protest against any further issue of gold bonds to foreigners. The American people will gladly take these bonds if made payable at the option of the holder."[4]

After the first national campaign of the Greenback Party, in 1876, when Cooper and Carey were in the contest against Hayes and Wheeler of the Republicans, Tilden and Hendricks of the Democratic Party and the Prohibitionists Smith and Stewart it became quickly and clearly evident that the party was lacking in numerical strength. Out of approximately 8,500,000 votes cast, the presidential nominees of the new group received only 81,740 votes. This represented the combined efforts of the Greenback and Labor Parties of the

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[4]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 142

West and East respectively. As between the two sections the West was in fact more strong or more loyal for, of the total vote for Cooper, 80% of it came from the western states. There seemed to be much to question in the statement of Hon. James Buchanan, "the political Moses of the 'New Party'," who some years earlier had stated that the new party differed from the Greeley movement of 1872 because the new movement began "with the people" whereas the latter movement had "commenced with the leaders in the sanctums of a few editors, and culminated in a set-up game between Horace Greeley and Gratz Brown."[5]

Subsequent to the election of 1876 it was recognized by the leaders of these two parties that little could be accomplished by either alone. Independently either was too weak to command a sufficient vote. Since they had many principles in common it was but natural that they could recognize their possibility of governing the balance of power between the Democrats and the Republican provided that they could join to form a single party. Actual results of this theory began to appear, and in the States of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio we find instances of co-operation between the two movements. By 1878 the national units were ready to undertake plans for such a combination, and in February of that year, at Toledo,

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[5]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 108

we find that an alliance was made by the National Greenback and the National Labor Party.

Thus we have the creation of the "National Party" as the organizers wished to have it known, or the "Greenback Labor Party" as it was more commonly called. This union brought great strength to the merged parties. In the very same year this combined group, compound of the Greenback and Labor Parties, cast over a million votes for its candidates for state offices, and it seemed as if the destruction of the existing partisan alignment in national politics was imminent.[6] The most accurate figure credited to the Party during this year of the state elections is 1,000,365 and this number, compared with 82,640 votes obtained in 1876, showed that the influence and strength of the group were growing and must be respected. This was the greatest showing of strength for an independent or third party in the United States up to that time.[7]

As an organization working in the many states the National Party was producing beneficial and effective results. It was not tested yet as a national body. This opportunity came in 1880, and in preparation for the election the party held a national convention in Chicago. Here the delegates met to help fulfill the prophecy made at Washington in 1878

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[6]Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 226

[7]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 124

when it was stated that the party which had developed such strength so rapidly could, without doubt, elect the next president.

However, when the representatives to the national convention convened we find evidences of dissension. On the one hand we learn of the loyal Greenbacker who, coming under the "Pomeroy, Hoyt Club or wing," demanded a distinct Greenback candidate, while the other factions were inclined to favor a coalition or fusion with one of the two major parties. A separate headquarters was maintained by the former group, but the two wings were united at the convention sessions. The platform adopted at this meeting contained the usual expression of principles dealing with financial matters and the affairs of labor. Its presidential nominee was James B. Weaver of Iowa. After a vigorous campaign in which Weaver took a very active part, travelling over 20,000 miles and speaking to at least 500,000 persons, the candidate of this National Labor Party obtained 308,578 votes. This total was favorable as compared with the vote of 80,000 or more for Peter Cooper, but an examination of the polling shows that the party was not functioning as it has been expected to. Its strength was still in the West, and although the East had shown a good promise of support, still the more rapid return of prosperity to this latter section of the country had affected its expected loyalty to this new movement. Less than 15 per cent of the total Greenback vote came from the Eastern States. The change in the

economic condition of the two parts of the country, namely the West and the East, broke the solidarity of the party. Besides this, we also have the strife within the party and this was so powerful that very distinct signs of it were revealed at the Chicago convention. Although this party had secured a creditable vote, the fact that it was so far from the objective made many more of its members feel that its efforts were premature. Possessed with this conviction, they returned to the party to which they had formerly pledged their allegiance.

This party became considerably weaker after the election of 1880, and in 1883 we read of newspaper items which proclaimed that the Greenback Party was dead.[8] But with a leader such as was Weaver this condition was shown to be most improbable. This man, whose service in great movements for reform has caused him to be likened to Bryan and Roosevelt, called a national convention of his party in May of 1883 at Indianapolis. At the meeting the name of General Benjamin F. Butler was proposed, although it was not until August 12 of the same year that the nominee forwarded his acceptance. This same Butler had also been named by the Anti-Monopoly Party at its convention in Chicago.

As the candidate of these two groups, Butler in the national election of 1884 secured but 175,000 votes,

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[8]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 146

little more than half the number obtained by his predecessor four years before.

The presidential campaign, in which Butler of Massachusetts had been selected as the nominee of the National Labor Party, marked the disappearance of this political organization. Its branches and offspring we shall meet in later elections but the election of 1884 proved that its proposed work was completed or rather that so much of its mission as it was possible to finish had been completed.

The results of the Greenback-Labor Party were definite and permanent in very many respects. When the scheme for the contraction of the currency as was provided for by the Resumption Bill of 1875 was stopped on the active protest of the Greenbackers, it became evident that they possessed power sufficient to influence national legislation. The passage of the Bland-Allison Act, over the veto of President Hayes was another accomplishment of this group. By this act alone the Secretary of the Treasury was authorized to purchase silver bullion and coin not less than 2,000,000 or more than 4,000,000 silver dollars a month.

Following this legislation we come to the passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, in 1899, and by means of these two acts there had been forced into circulation about $450,000,000 of silver money. These were material steps in the direction desired by the Greenbackers, namely, to secure an increased circulating medium. Apart from the benefits

resulting with reference to labor, Civil Service reform, and monetary matters, a very important result was the re-appearance of the Democratic Party. To the revival of interest in and strength of the Democratic Party the Greenback-Labor Movement had contributed substantially.

The results of the efforts of the Greenbackers were direct. Since the act of 1878 there have been outstanding $346,681,016; backed by a cash reserve of $150,000,000 held as a special fund in the Treasury. The amount of these greenbacks never increases or decreases, since the law provides that any notes redeemed in cash at the Treasury shall be promptly reissued. The appearance of Treasury Notes followed the passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act and although these have gradually disappeared from circulation their place has been taken directly by silver dollars coined from the bullion originally purchased with the notes. Indirectly their place is filled by a silver certificate issued as representative of the silver dollar.

Chapter VI

THE POPULISTS

The People's Party, or the Populists, as this movement was commonly known, made its initial appearance in American politics in 1890. Its way had been prepared by the formation of granges, wheels, and alliances by the farmers of the Western agricultural states and also by the rise of strong labor organizations in the cities. It began as an attempt on the part of the united group of urban and rural labor to control legislation in the interest of the common people. Dissatisfied with the existing economic conditions and feeling that the ordinary citizen, especially of the South and West, was inflicted with unjust burdens, the spirit of its leaders and followers was against plutocracy and the great accumulation and combinations of wealth and the control of the country by the moneyed monopolies.[1]

This movement towards the formation of a third political party was similar to preceding attempts in that it did not spring into being with great speed nor by virtue of a definite plan. Like other such agitations it followed attempts to express the popular opposition to certain prevailing conditions. These upheavals arose throughout the entire country in an independent fashion, and when it became

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[1]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Pages 147-171

evident that the sponsors held some grievances in common, it was but natural that co-operation between the group should result. This mutual interest and effort attained a notable magnitude and merited the standing of a national political party.

Thus it was that in 1890 the stage was set for this act on the part of the various factions in the many states. Great response resulted from the efforts of the Southern Alliance and the Northwestern Alliance, groups of farmers which were proclaimed to be non-political in interest but which proved to be extremely powerful when it came to the selection and approval of candidates for public office.[2] It is well stated by Buck when he records that these two strong organizations assumed all the functions of political parties except the nomination of candidates.

On July 2, 1892, the first national convention of the People's Party met at Omaha, Nebraska, and there nominated candidates for national offices. The platform decided upon by the thirteen hundred delegates from all parts of the United States was essentially similar to the "Demands" of the Southern Alliance at its convention in St. Louis in 1889.

This platform of the new party was received by the delegates with tumultuous applause, it being noted that the shouting and cheering constituted a forty-minute demonstration.

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[2]Buck, S. J. -- The Agrarian Crusade -- Pages 111-141

As we can best learn of the aims and purposes of the movement by a consideration of the stated principles, it will be helpful to us to spend a moment or two here. By examining these planks we may learn of the issues that were concerning the voters at that time, and a later check on the success or failure of these policies may be used to measure the strength of this newly formed party.

The platform consisted of eleven essential planks and a quick perusal of them indicates the vital interests of the time. Four "money" planks called for the following: (1) a national currency, safe, sound, and flexible, issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts; (2) the sub-treasury system of loans as set forth in the plan of the Farmers' Alliance; (3) free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the rates of 16 to 1; and, (4) an increase in the circulating medium until there should be not less than $50. per capita. Besides the foregoing we also find planks which call for a graduated income tax, the establishment of Postal Savings Banks, government ownership of railroad, telephone, and telegraph systems, restriction of immigration, and the election of United States Senators by a direct vote of the people. Two more items, one concerned with a demand for the return of lands now held by corporations and in excess of their actual need and another expressing opposition to any subsidy or national aid to any private corporation for any purpose, complete the important sections of the platform although the convention while in

session took the opportunity to adopt resolutions and an expression of sympathy in connection with other vital issues of the day.

The name of Judge Walter A. Gresham of Indiana was to be offered as the presidential nominee. However, unanimity was unobtainable, and in his place was named General James B. Weaver, who was a conservative among the Populists and a representative of the old Alliance men. As a running mate, for election to the office of Vice-President, there was nominated General James G. Field of Virginia. We have spoken of Weaver before, having seen him nominated to head the Greenback ticket in the election of 1880. At that time he conducted a most vigorous campaign, and, in behalf of the Populist's interests, we find him again exerting himself strenuously in 1892. It has been observed that the selection of Weaver was a tactical error on the ground that his former unsuccessful attempts to lead a third party movement caused a lack of hope and enthusiasm in the supporters. "The wicked politicians of the Republican and Democratic parties breathed easier and ate with better appetites when the Gresham bogie disappeared and they found their familiar old enemy, General Weaver, in the lead of the People's movement".[3]

In spite of this alleged handicap, General Weaver made another active campaign, touring the entire country being

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Buck, S. J. -- The Agrarian Crusade -- Page 146

accompanied by General Field when he was in the Southern States. In the South it was the intention and aim of the Populists to win over the Republican Party, which was there in the minority. On the other hand the plan called for in the West was one of fusion with or absorption of the Democratic vote. This strategy indicated the adoption of the advice of General Butler who in 1884 had warned that the success of a third party must depend upon alliances and fusions with the existing major parties.

The results of the election of 1892 showed that Cleveland received 5,554,226 votes compared with 5,175,202 for Harrison and 1,041,577 for Weaver, the Populist candidate. This vote for Weaver constituted the largest vote ever polled by a third cause in a national election. Further than this, it marked the first time that the candidate of a third party had received a place in the electoral college, Weaver obtaining 22 of the electoral votes. Besides this evidence of the new party's strength, we also find that the 53rd Congress, meeting in August, 1893, had three Populist Senators, one each from Kansas, South Dakota, and Nebraska, and eight members of the House from Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, Colorado, and Nevada.[4]

"The Republican party is as dead as the Whig party was after the Scott campaign of 1852, and from this time forward will dimish in every State of the Union and cannot

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[4]Boothe, V. B. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 109

make another campaign. The Populist will now commence a vigorous campaign and will push the work of organization and education in every county in the Union". This was the utterance of General Weaver one week after election day in 1892. The next important election, that of 1894 seemed to give truth to this statement for in that year we find that the new party elected 6 United States Senators, 7 Congressman, 22 State officials, 150 State Senators and 315 State Representatives.[5]

Assuming that the economic situation of the country would remain unchanged, and further supposing that the policies of the two major parties would continue unmodified, we might find that Weaver's prophecy was correct. However, neither of these conditions held true, and we may expect to learn that the words of the Populist leader were unwisely spoken. From our experience with the growth of third parties we have noticed that their greatest strength is reached when they have made an impression on either or both of the major parties. Their work is done when they have modified the policies of the older organizations and it is not their task to usurp the functions and powers of either the Democratic or Republican bodies.

The history of the Populist Movement affords us another illustration of the working of this law. The

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[5]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 281

Populist theory permeated the sphere of the Democrats when it forced the latter party to accept the income tax idea, and the inclusion of it in the Tariff Act of 1894 was a most significant admission. However, the greatest triumph of the Populist Party was in forcing the currency question into the front ranks of the National campaign of 1896 and in pushing its main issue, the free coinage of silver, into the platform of the Democratic Party. So compelling were its efforts in behalf of the currency question that there resulted a division in the ranks of each of the two main parties.

At Chicago, in July of 1896, the Silver Democrats met and nominated William Jennings Bryan for president, largely on account of his able championship of the free-silver plank. This step on the part of the Democratic Party marked a most notable victory for the Populist movement. It was in fact a triumph and a climax of its efforts, for with this recognition of the silver question by the Democrats the chief point of the Populists was gained. The Populist Convention was held a few weeks after that of the Democrats, and the nomination of Mr. Bryan was endorsed by it. However, the "Middle-of-the-Roaders" were strong enough to prevent a like endorsement of Arthur Sewell, the candidate of the Democrats for Vice-President, and as their nominee the Populist Party chose Thomas C. Watson of Georgia.[6]

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[6] Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Pages 166-167

When the Democratic and Populist Parties so pooled their interests in 1896, an end was brought to the lengthy struggle which had been undertaken by the first anti-monopoly groups in 1873 and had been carried on and fostered by the several third party groups throughout the twenty-three intervening years. As the election of 1896 approached the work of third parties, at least for the time being, was approaching completion. Bryan emerged from the election only 500,000 votes behind McKinley, which was a small part of the 14,000,000 votes cast. Of the total vote Bryan as the Populist candidate received only 8.3 per cent, a gain of 5 per cent over 1892 but not an increase in proportion to the large popular vote that was cast.

Chapter VII

THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY

Upon the death of William McKinley on September 14, 1901, there came to the Presidency one whose name is synonymous with the Progressive or "Bull Moose" movement. Theodore Roosevelt, a man of dynamic personality and the foremost apostle of the strenuous life in modern politics, is naturally linked with this schism of the Republican Party, which occurred in 1912.

Thus when about to write of this rise of another insurgent group we must resist the temptation to narrate and describe the active and colorful career of this energetic statesman. We must review the entire movement in itself, laying aside personalities and viewing the conflicting interests of the different sections of the country and of the parties. However, the close connection between Roosevelt and this new party persists in spite of the statement of authorities to the effect that the insurgent movement existed before there was any Progressive Party and that Roosevelt was not the leader of the Insurgent movement.[1]

When Theodore Roosevelt succeeded to the office of the assassinated McKinley he stated that he would

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[1]Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Pages 247-278

consider his administration merely the continuation of his predecessor's and that he intended to execute the policies of the more conservative leader whom the people of the country had twice chosen as against the radical candidate of the Democratic party.

The actions of the new President were inconsistent with his promises, and it was not long after he had taken the oath of office that it became apparent that his fashion of heading the executive department of the government differed greatly from the style of the one whom he had succeeded. Thus in the years between 1902 and 1909 those who were unconsciously building up the structure of the Progressive Party were making marked headway under the leadership of this fearless director.

We observe a serious breach appearing between the Senatorial and Congressional leaders who now became known as the "Old Guard" and the radical element of the Republican Party, the leaders of which became known as the "Progressive Republicans". The former group was represented by Aldrich in the Senate and Speaker Cannon in the House, while listed among the "Insurgents" we find Senators Borah of Idaho, LaFollette of Wisconsin, Dolliver and Cummins of Iowa, Bristow of Kansas, Clapp of Minnesota, Bourne of Washington, and Dixon of Montana.

Great activity resulted from the interest and efforts of these radicals during the period mentioned and

under the leadership of Roosevelt the "Reactionaries", or "Standpatters", suffered many setbacks. Roosevelt was a masterful politician who knew how to make "news" and appeal to public sentiment through the medium of his public message and the press.[2] A good illustration of the operation of this faculty can be seen by recalling his re-election in 1904. With the secret dislike and opposition of the machine leaders against him he was kept in office by greater popular and electoral majorities than any President before him had ever received. He now reaped the benefit of the great powers which he possessed to attract the love and respect of the average voter. The latter had witnessed Roosevelt's fearlessness in his attacks upon the moneyed interests, his expenses of the Insurance scandals and the arraignment of the powerful Beef-Trust.

When Roosevelt continued in the Presidency in 1905 "by his own right", he and his colleagues continued their policies of social justice and equal rights with the sanction of the electorate and the security of a full four-year period within which to execute their theories. This second Administration came to be identified with the so-called "Roosevelt policies", among the more important of which may be enumerated the following; (1) equal industrial opportunities and equal punishment for all illegal acts whether they be of

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[2]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 179

the large or small operator; (2) government regulation of public-service corporations; (3) the development of waterways; (4) a strong navy; (5) efficiency and publicity in government and the recognition of the obligations that men owe to one another, as capital to labor and labor to capital; and (6) the conservation of the natural resources.

With a strong organization now built up within the Republican Party, this faction was able to secure the nomination and election of William H. Taft to the Presidency in 1908. Taft had been the Secretary of War in the Roosevelt Cabinet, and it had been expected that he would simply carry on the policies of the progressive element. Taft was an entirely different type of man from Roosevelt, his theories concerning the Presidential duties were different, his attitude towards the "Standpatters" was less deadly, and his personality was not that of the forceful man whom he followed. It was said by Senator Dolliver of Iowa that he was "a good man surrounded by men who knew what they wanted".[3]

It soon appeared in the minds of the Progressives that President Taft was not proving himself loyal to the principles of this group. There resulted a bitter conflict between this body and the band of regular Republicans who gathered about Speaker Cannon. In the midst of them we find

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[3]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 186

Taft, trying to meditate between the rival wings of his party. An outstanding measure of importance, one that was passed in the early days of his Administration in 1910, and one which was vehemently attacked and opposed by the Progressives, was the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Bill. As passed, this bill differed greatly from its original form, and although the President made some attempts to restore its former nature, he was unsuccessful, and he finally signed it. Later in the year, in September, 1909, while speaking at Winona, Minnesota, he described the bill as "the best that had ever been passed", and the effect of this utterance marked the beginning of the wide breach within the party.[4]

In 1910 immediate results of the conflict began to appear, and the returns from many states showed Democratic "landslides" in their particular elections. In nine states the Republicans lost the legislatures and the number of Democratic Senators was increased from thirty-three to thirty-eight. It was made extremely clear that the Progressives must not be ignored.

From this time on the power of the new movement was plainly manifested by the success achieved in opposing the plans and measures of the "Old Guard" and by the alliances made with the Democratic members of the House and Senate.

As evidence of the bitterness felt towards the President we might review the quotations from the statements

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[4]Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 422

of La Follette and Cummins. The former declared that Taft "had deserted the Roosevelt policies -- had placed in his cabinet men devoted to the great corporations; had surrended to the financial interests of Alaska; and had supported the indefensible Payne-Aldrich tariff". The latter Senator made a most deadly thrust when he charged that the President had allied himself with "Senators and members of the House who are known from one border of the country to the other as reactionaries or standpatters."[5]

With meetings and informal conventions being held by these insurgents and with much success crowning their efforts it was but a short time before the organization took a definite form. In October of 1911 we find an assembly in Chicago, although because of the absence of many and important leaders, its significance was impaired. Here La Follette was endorsed as the candidate for president. This act was challenged and the right of La Follette to the nomination was disputed by the supporters of Roosevelt who felt that the former president would have a better chance of defeating Taft. This phase of the campaign was of some importance as it was later claimed that the Senator from Wisconsin was understood to be throwing his influence privately to Woodrow Wilson. This charge has been made by some writers of political history but any evidence of the same is meager. To have been prevented from heading the national ticket might

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[5] Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 424

have not allowed him to exercise to the highest degree those incomparable powers of leadership which were his. However, to intimate that positive force was exerted by him in opposition to his fellows is to allege a charge against which his life's record rebels and, which would be entirely inconsistent with those qualities of sincerity and intelligence that have allowed his biographers to place him among the foremost American statesmen. An upright and courageous representative, La Follette, having served several terms in Congress, was defeated for re-election in 1890. This defeat proved to be but a victory in disguise as new opportunities were opened to him. These he grasped and on January 7, 1901, he took the oath of office as Governor of Wisconsin. From the first citizen of that State he became one of the most notable and successful leaders of an independent and progressive political faction. Not only did he later represent his State in the United States Senate but he was recognized as the delegate who epitomized and protected the interests of this particular group throughout the nation. To his son he bequeathed a glorious yet onerous legacy.

Speaking of the campaign of 1912, his contemporary biographers narrate that it was quite generally conceded by impartial students of politics that Senator La Follette was the "logical" candidate of the Republican party. They state that he was also the first choice of the rank and file of the party. However, more significant are their words when they add, "it is only fair to say that he was generally

regarded at the close of the campaign of 1912 as stronger than ever in the confidence of the people who believe he will continue for many years as a leader in the cause of democracy and representative government."[6]

Again in February of 1912 do we find a meeting of those interested in the choice of a nominee, and we witness the offering of the first place on the party's ticket to Theodore Roosevelt. He intimated his intention to accept and stressed his hope that the people of the country might be given an opportunity to express their choice by means of the direct primary. Ten States of the Union had such a provision as part of their election machinery, and in all of the ten States, with the exception of North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts, Roosevelt won by large majorities. As far as it could be determined the choice of the people was Roosevelt as the Republican nominee in the coming election.

With the arrival of the delegates to the Republican National Convention in Chicago on June 18, 1912, the feud reached its highest and most stormy peak. It became evident that the Taft men would control the assembly and the culmination of the series of debates and conflicts came with the announcement by Allen of Kansas that the Roosevelt delegates would no longer share the burden of

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[6] Webb, Mary Griffen
" Edna Lenore --
Famous Living American - Page 296

responsibility for the convention's acts. After the regular Republican Convention had adjourned the Progressives transferred their activities to another hall in the same city and here plans were made for a National Convention of the new "Bull Moose" Party. The first session of this gathering opened on August 5, 1912, and it has been recorded that nothing like this convention has ever before been known in American politics. The delegates were strong numerically, emotionally, and nationally. The principles of social and industrial justice were the foundation planks of the new party's platform. These applied to such vital and concrete aspects of life as child labor, wage standards, employment of women in industry, convict labor, industrial education, and the protection of health and the promotion of safety in industry. Another change which was advocated by the platform of this party was the adoption of the "judicial recall". It had been explained that the absolute authority vested in the Supreme Court of the land had rendered the will of the people ineffective. That the judicial decisions might be nullified as could the acts of the legislature was a prime contention of the Progressives.

A very lively and keen campaign followed the convention of the contending parties and we have an example of a third party which deserved to be ranked with the Democratic and Republican organizations and which compelled a change in the popular expression to the designation "the three major parties". Fiery speeches and bitter attacks marked

the contest, and the attempt to assassinate Roosevelt was an indication of the dramatic fashion in which the procedure was carried on.

The election resulted in a sweeping victory for the Democratic Party. The popular vote was as follows: Wilson 6,290,818; Roosevelt, 4,123,206; Taft, 3, 484,529. Wilson received the largest majority in the Electoral College that was ever given to a candidate. There have been many interpretations of the votes cast. It is stressed that, in spite of the fact that the election seemed to be an overwhelming triumph for the Democrats, it is also true that Wilson had received above a hundred thousand popular votes less than Bryan received four years before.[7] It is also pointed out that the Democratic Party was still the minority party because the Republicans and Progressives together polled a clear majority of the popular votes. Suffice for us to say just at this point, at least until we reach our enumeration of conclusions, that there is much truth in the comment that the populist leaven which had started its work of reform back in 1876 had mightily influenced the nation. As proof of this it is recalled that the combined popular vote for Wilson and Roosevelt was 10,500,000 out of a total of 15,000,000. "The nation as a whole had voted Progressive".[8]

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[7]Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 275
[8]Boothe, V. B. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 117

Chapter VIII

THE FARMER-LABOR MOVEMENT

In the course of this country's history from the time of the Civil War, we have witnessed great steps taken by the agricultural and industrial interests. With the expansion of the territory westward there was naturally an increase in the already great number of people who lived by the soil. As the machine age rapidly approached and the working man of the city became merely a machine-operator he too saw his numbers increase and his dignity frequently trod under foot.

Thus it was that the laborer in the city and the laborer of the country found many policies and operations of the government unsuited to their requirments and very often detrimental to their welfare. As the need existed for opposition on their part and since there were many common enemies against whom they raised their attack, it was but natural that this community of interests would result in a union of effort.

In one of our earlier chapters we considered the approach and effect of the Greenback Party, and we might recall that this movement reached the peak of its strength with the formation of the Greenback-Labor Party. This agitation was back around the year 1870, but it may be cited as an example of the coalition of the rural and urban interests. The farmers and laborers have in common a

deep-seated antipathy to domination by plutocratic influences, whether in rural districts or in the urban community, and they constantly struggle to express this in concrete political results."[1] During the national campaign of 1920 we see another occasion for the pooling of the power of these two groups and for the formation of the Farmer-Labor Party which had as its presidential candidate Parley P. Christensen with Max S. Hayes as his running mate.

The nucleus of the body was composed of the remnants of the Roosevelt Progressive Party which had become known as the Committee of Forty-eight, a few union labor leaders of the Middle West, and a group of politicians from the Northwest who drew their following principally from the discontented farmers of the spring-wheat section.

From a view of its platform which we shall later consider we may be able to judge and gauge the economic and social causes which brought about its organization. First we shall briefly describe its formation and assembly. Originally starting in Chicago on November 24, 1919, as a Labor Party, its leaders proclaimed that its mission would be to educate "all hand and brain workers of the country to support the principles of a political, social, and industrial democracy."[2]

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[1] Merriam, C. E. -- The American Party System -- Page 11

[2] Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 266

At a later convention in the same city the name of the organization was changed to the Farmer-Labor Party, although the labor element dominated the convention and the activities of the group. Nine hundred delegates representing forty-three states were present at the convention. At first the Presidential nomination was offered to Senator Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin, and upon his refusal, the former Progressive, Parley P. Christensen of Salt Lake City, was named.

It was neither the desire or function of Mr. LaFollette to be a labor movement leader. "Without the impulse, it would have been false, it would have been artificial, for him to try to lead. He was true to himself and white to the whole situation in refusing to try."[3] Commenting upon the refusal of the logical leader to head the new movement, Gilbert Roe, the spokesman for LaFollette at the convention, gave the following reasons why the Wisconsin Senator had failed to accept the nomination. "In the first place, the platform committee had reached its decision so late that LaFollette had not been able to see in person, much less to study, either the majority or minority elections. But more important than that, said Mr. Roe, the Senator could not convince himself that the joint convention represented a real unity of purpose or a movement that could survive a single election."[4]

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[3]Hard, W. --"Third Party Happenings" -- The New Republic -- July 28, 1920

[4]"Christensen's Convention" -- The Nation -- July 24, 1930

A study of the platform of this new party discloses the presence of the strong influence possessed and exerted by the labor faction. The labor leaders who were interested in the promotion of this movement were radicals, and they strongly opposed the principle of keeping labor out of politics, as was advocated by Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor. So these fiery trade unionists, in their desire to give vent to their dissatisfaction, made great promises of much relief to the laborer in industry. We learn that the platform favored the right of labor to strike, deprived the courts of their power to issue injunctions would strip the courts of their authority to declare legislative acts unconstitutional, approved of the election of Federal judges, subject to recall, and recommended the public ownership and operation of public utilities and natural resources. Other planks, still emphasizing the matters of affecting labor, called for a steeply graded income tax, protection of women in industry, the restriction on the employment of children under 16, and the recognition of Soviet Russia. A few measures adopted in behalf of the farmer were the sum of the recognition by him. A reflection of the party's strength or lack of strength, can be gained when we note that its total vote amounted to 265,411 ballots, which represented about one per cent of the country's total popular vote and not even one-third of the vote cast for the Socialist candidates. As compared with the Progressives of 1912, or the Populists in 1892, or even with the Green-

back Party of 1880, the showing of the Farmer-Labor party was very weak.[5]

This attempt at the formation of a dominating party had lost much of its promise when LaFollette had declined to accept the nomination. At the time of the election the forces were not able to present a strong front. Even some of the elements which had helped in the early days of its organization had become numbered among the scorners of the agitation. Among them we find the Labor Party, the American Party of Texas, the Single-Tax party, the Committee of Forty-eight the World-War Veterans, the Non-Partisan League, the Private Soldiers and Sailor League, the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the American Constitutional Party. All of these groups which had made up a large portion of the original plan had withdrawn their support and, on the contrary, employed active measures to defeat that cause which they had formerly advocated.[6] It was recognized and judged by these groups that the name and the platform of the new party are but a project and a hope, not a purpose and a fact. It was understood by them that the declarations were not the agreement of the representatives of American labor and the American farmers.[7] These former allies

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[5] Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 335-337

[6] "Birth of the "Farmer-Labor Party". The Literary Digest -- July 24, 1920

[7] "The New Party" -- The New Republic -- July 28, 1920

of those who still persisted with the creation of the Farmer-Labor party had acknowledged that the two types of workers had little in common, or, as it might be more properly stated, they had unequal representations in the claims and demands as expressed in the platform at the Chicago convention. "Apart from the desire of the labor leaders to unionize farm labor, and their disposition to class farmers among the profiteers, their can be no permanent alliance between revolutionary unionists and farmers; for the latter staunchly support the institution of property whenever they feel that it is really threatened. In other respects, also, farmers have reason to distrust the left wing of organized labor.[8]

As the results showed, the foregoing remarks correctly forecast the failure of the efforts of Christensen and his followers. However, it must not be thought that the remaining defenders of the movement were anything but earnest and sincere in their efforts. As expressed by Buck, the "Farmer-Labor Party has not dealt in weasel words. It has not sacrificed principle for political expediency".[9]

The forces of the Farmer-Labor Party were completely routed in the 1920 election as the figures already quoted have shown. At the state elections during

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[8] "A Farmer-Labor Alliance"-- The Weekly Review -- August 25, 1920

[9] Buck, R. M. -- "The Farmer-Labor Party"-- The The Nation -- August 7, 1920

the year 1922 the party indicated that it still lived, and more than this, that it had developed strength during the interim.

In order to make our survey of this movement complete it shall be part of our task to study such actions in the several states. Before coming to this, however, we find the necessity of saying a few words explantory of one of the factors which had been early prominent in the party. This is the Non-Partisan League, and so peculiar and successful have been its achievements that it merits some space in our work. This organization is not a party but a movement. It has to do with state and not with national politics, and, since it works through different parties in different states, it cannot pledge itself to any national candidate without changing its principles and practice. It was originally formed in the Spring of 1915 in North Dakota, but within the period of a very few years it had spread nation-wide and had local organizations in fifteen states. Its leaders have not floundered in the futilities that over-take so many reform parties, but have become practical politicians of a most adept sort, beating the hacks of the old parties at their own game.[10] The fight on the part of the League is against those who are said to be enjoying special privileges and in behalf of the great masses which form the democracy. As such it has

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[10] Warner, A. "When Farmers Turn Politicians" -- The Nation -- August 14, 1920

been denounced as being too "socialistic". Among the things for which it has stood and fought are public ownership of public necessities, women suffrage, increased taxes on large incomes and excess profits, State terminal elevators, warehouses, flour mills, creameries, and cold storage plants, and the standardization of rural schools. These give us some idea of the policies fostered and favored by the Non-Partisan League.

Without the expense or labor of establishing a new and separate party this organization has gained control of the particular party machine as it was operating in a certain state and by its use the desired end has been gained. It is its method to control one of the old parties, but in the event of failure its advocates are ready to create a third party.[11] To "take the party away" from their opponents within the party is the object of these non-Partisans. For example in North Dakota and Minnesota its contests were in the Republican primaries, while its efforts were exerted in the Democratic primaries in such States as Montana and Oklahoma.

The elections held in the various States during the year 1922 served notice that the elements of discontent which had attempted to form the Farmer-Labor Party were very much alive and quite able to impress their influence upon the choice of candidates in many States. As time had gone

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[11] Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 270

on it became more evident that the failure of 1920 had resulted more from the absence of proper leadership and a lack of unity than from the alleged fact that the unrest did not exist. The Farmer-Labor Party elected Senator Shipstead in Minnesota and sent five of the ten Congressmen to Washington. In the same State the same group gained control of the Legislature and stopped just short of electing a Democratic governor. In Colorado, William E. Sweet was elected governor on a radical platform in the Democratic Party. Dill from Washington and Wheeler from Montana came to the Senate, both on a progressive ticket. The same element in the Republican Party sent LaFollette from Wisconsin, Brookhart from Iowa and Howell from Nebraska. In the State of Michigan, Ferris, a Democrat, was elected to the Senate, the first of his party to be so selected in a period of seventy years. Frazier was sent to the Senate from North Dakota and Hiram Johnson was reelected to the same office from California. When Senator Nelson of Minnesota died and a special election was held in that State, the people chose the "dirt-farmer" Magnus Johnson as against Preuss the regular Republican candidate, and it was done by a majority of over 90,000 votes. The Republican Senatorial candidate in Massachusetts, Henry Cabot Lodge, barely escaped defeat and was victorious by a scant margin of about 7,000 votes.[12]

With successes such as the ones above enumerated

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[12] Boothe, V. B. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 118-121

there seemed to be adequate proof of the existence of a spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction. These indeed were clearcut signs of the successes of a particular and powerful element whether they be called insurgents, progressives, or radicals. With the approach of the national election of 1924 we witness another attempt to weld the interests of these groups.

A convention was held in Cleveland on July 4 and 5 of 1924 and it was advertised as a "Conference for Progressive Political Action". Over one thousand delegates were present representing labor unions, the farmers' organizations, the Non-Partisan League, the Socialists, the Committee of 48, and the remnants of the "Farmer-Labor" Party of 1920. At this convention LaFollette was nominated for President, and in reply he agreed to run as an independent candidate.

Despite the presence of this logical candidate at the head of the Independent ticket and notwithstanding the existence of much economic and social unrest, the Republicans gained a decisive victory. The new party drew but comparatively few from the Republican ranks while the latter in turn were attracting many Democratic votes from the League of Nations and international alliance planks of the Democratic Party.

Chapter IX

THE PROHIBITION PARTY

From our study, as it has been pursued thus far, we find that the several movements have made their appearances at fairly definite periods. This fact has allowed a chronological arrangement of the minor parties and, this order has seemed desirable even though we find present many issues which have been common to several of the groups.

The Progressive Party fixes the years around 1912 in our mind. The period from 1890 to 1900 marks the rise and declivity of the Populist movement. When we think of the Liberal Republican agitation we recall the time between the first election of Grant and the national campaign of 1876. The movements mentioned, as well as the others which we have considered, have been born, have flourished, and have passed on within a reasonably fixed and surprisingly short period.

There have been two other minor parties which have named candidates in national elections, and which are worthy of some treatment by us. They are peculiar in as much as they have existed over longer periods of time than the groups that we have already studied. They did not grow to expend their strength in two or three campaigns. Their supporters, as evidenced by the votes, did not equal in number those of the other minor groups. However, the fact that they endured throughout so many

years, and the consequent truth that they represented vital issues, establish their right to be considered in a study of third parties.

One of these groups is the Prohibition party and in this chapter we shall study its organization and its accomplishments. The other group includes the several Socialist movements and the next chapter of this thesis will be devoted to those events and persons that have introduced this interest into the political field of this country.

The Prohibition party has had the longest life of any regularly organized minor group. It was founded in 1869 and its first convention was held at Columbus, Ohio, on February 22, 1872. Every four years since then the followers of this movement have "formed their ticket and promulgated their views, undiscouraged by the fact that they have never yet secured an electoral vote, but encouraged, on the other hand by the growing strength of their popular vote".[1]

In our brief study of the Prohibition Party the following procedure seems suitable. First we may review some of its campaigns, its candidates, and their respective votes. Then a consideration of its varying and modified planks may enable us to understand the numerical changes in the ballots, as well as offering us

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[1] Hopkins, James H. -- A History of Political Parties in the U. S. -- Page 132

opportunities to learn of and explain the progress of the party. Finally, the recent condition of the organization and the nature and extent of its present functions will be treated.

James Black was this group's first candidate for President and in the election of 1872 he polled 5,608 votes. In the two subsequent elections the candidates, Smith in 1876, and Dow in 1880, netted around 10,000 votes each, the vote of the latter being slightly better than Smith's. Beginning with the nomination of John P. St. John in 1884, and continuing through the campaign of 1916, when this party's candidate was J. Frank Hanly, we find the period of the organization's greatest vigor. In 1892, with a total of 264,133 votes, or 2½ per cent of the popular vote, the Prohibitionists reached the climax of their career. The number of votes cast for its candidate in 1916, although numerically large, 221,329, was proportionately small and since that time the vote has diminished rapidly.

The reason for the recent decline of this party has been the adoption of the Prohibition Amendment to the Federal Constitution, it becoming effective in 1920. The desire for national prohibition was, in the beginning, the prime objective in the creation of the organization but, although its name seems to limit its interest to this issue we are to see that it took stands on many other popular questions. We shall likewise see that the

gaining of nation-wide prohibition was not the direct result of the efforts of this body, although it was materially successful in ridding particular states of the liquor traffic. "It is evident that the Prohibition Party, regarded as an instrument for securing control of the federal government, has been a failure."[2]

In their first campaign, that of 1872, they played the part of a reform organization. Reform of the liquor situation by the abolition of this alleged evil, reform of the Civil Service, changes in the manner by which the President and Vice-President were elected, equal suffrage for women, a liberal immigration policy, and the development of common schools at public expense were soon of the planks in the initial platform. In 1876 there was added to their list of reforms, the abolition of lotteries, gambling in stocks and produce, polygamy and capital punishment. Sunday laws were favored, the use of the Bible in public schools was urged, and the settlement of international disputes by arbitration was advocated. The votes were not being obtained in large numbers, and it began to appear to some of the leaders of the Prohibition Party that its interest was divided among too many issues. Thus it was that in 1880 their efforts were concentrated on the liquor question alone. With Neal Dow polling but 10,305 votes in this year, less than a gain of 800 over his

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[2]Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 320

predecessor, it seems that the multiplicity of issues could not have been responsible for the formerly poor showing of the group. This seems especially true when we note that, in the election of 1884 and 1888, when this party received 151,809 and 249,907 votes respectively, it had returned to the practice of asserting itself on such questions as the tariff policy and the monetary standard. This interest in all important national matters continued and the number of ballots was increasing until the election of 1896 was reached, at which time the silver question divided this party as it did the Republican and the Democrats. In this particular year the Prohibition vote dropped to 132,007. For a second time, in 1900, it was decided to emphasize the liquor issue alone but the vote recorded was not showing a normal increase. Since that date the platform has been made up of such attractive issues as would call for the support of the large masses of voters and it has not been limited to the stand for prohibition. Subsequent to the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, many have felt that the work of the Prohibition Party has been completed. In 1920, its candidate, Watson, obtained but 189,408 votes while in the election of 1924 the number for Jaris, its nominee at this time, dropped to 56,289. With the advent of the 1928 campaign there arose much doubt as to what course should be taken. On July 12 of that year, in the city of Chicago, a convention was

held and it resulted in the naming of William F. Varney and James A. Edgerton for President and Vice-President respectively. Many of the former leaders of this body were against this procedure and the party did not possess a united front. Typical of the opinions of these former advocates was that of Oliver W. Stewart, a former chairman of the Prohibition National Committee. He rated the nominating of candidates as a "weak and futile gesture".[3] Those of this mind felt that the party would be in a better position to work for its cause if it threw its resources behind Mr. Hoover. That their opinion was correct is shown by the small vote accorded Varney whose total reached but 30,106 ballots.

These facts and events, briefly constitute the annals of the Prohibition Party and although its work and support seem to be weak at the present time it will not be at all surprising if a new field is opened to it and it continues to be the most persistent of all minor parties.

One thing worthy of mention when writing of this group is the fact that it was the first national political organization to countenance the co-operative of women.[4]

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[3] Literary Digest -- "The Prohibition Party's Ticket" -- July 28, 1928

[4] Ostrogorski, M. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 173

Another item which should be related when speaking of attempts to suppress the sale of liquors is the work of the Anti-Saloon League. To it belongs much credit for the gaining of the National Prohibition Amendment. Here we need but mention its purpose and its mission. It was founded by Rev. Howard H. Russell at Oberlin, Ohio, and its existence dates back to May 1893. Succeeding to the active work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, which had not been strong enough because of the lack of suffrage, the new organization, led by the Rev. Russell, spread the gospel of prohibition by means of church assemblies and religious meetings. It has become a non-partisan body, working through the major parties, and repudiating altogether the strategy of the Prohibition Party. In this way it exerted much greater influence than the latter organization upon the Congress of the United States and the state legislatures.[5] "By its enemies the accusation is lodged against the Anti-Saloon League that it is a political machine - an intolerant political machine. Verily, the accusation is true."[6]

Whether this body be deemed a political, religious, or philanthropic organization the truth

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[5] Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 322

[6] Chalfant, Harry M. --"The Anti-Saloon League -- Why and What?" The Annals -- The American Academy of Political and Social Science - September 1923.

remains that it has had great influence upon a question or condition which concerns the interest of voters and vote-getters of the present prohibition era.

Chapter X

THE SOCIALIST PARTIES

In the United States of America the several political movements that have been based upon the principles of Socialism, have been, in the main, working class movements. We first find a Presidential nominee put forth by such a group in the election of 1892 when the Socialist-Labor Party named Simon Wing who polled 21,164 votes.

There have been several shades or wings of Socialists in this country, and, in order to get a clear understanding of these groups, it will be necessary to examine the movements historically.

The Socialist-Labor Party, which is the oldest of these bodies in this nation, was established in Philadelphia in 1876. It was the intention of the leaders of this organization to spread the Marxian propaganda among the American proletariat. It was in the national campaign of 1888 that an entrance was made into the political field and a ticket of presidential electors was provided. As the party was recorded in favor of the abolition of the Presidency, no candidate for this office was nominated. As far as the securing of votes is concerned this party has been negligible. With candidates named in practically every national election since 1892 the group has not been able to obtain 40,000 ballots at one time. It has made overtures for union with other parties but after the

negotiation of such alliances, the new platform has not been radical enough, and, it usually severed its connections and issued planks of its own with a nominee selected from its own numbers.

Always opposed to the type of trade - unionism advocated and promoted by the American Federation of Labor, the Socialist-Labor Party has taken the stand that the political and economic organizations of the wage-earners should go hand in hand. It has advocated that all workers, regardless of their trade, should be consolidated into industrial unions, such as the Industrial Workers of the World. It has maintained that the machinery of government, and of production and distribution should be owned and controlled collectively by the people in common. This is a more extreme demand than that of the milder Socialistic elements that simply advocate public ownership and control in the sense of state or municipal operation. All of our economic distresses are caused by the control that private individuals have of the sources of productive and the instruments of labor. It has called upon all laborers to unite into, "a class conscious body, to take possession of the public powers - the land and the means of production and transportation, and to substitute a co-operative commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war, and social disorder".[1]

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[1]Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 259

Of the Socialist Parties, which we have had in our country, this particular group has been the weakest and the least successful one. Its general tenets have been as already outlined and as the various campaigns, with their different issues, have come and gone, one may note applications of these radical theories as the stands that were taken by this party. For example, in the campaign of 1920, this body favored the economic and political systems that were being established in Soviet Russia and it recognized them as the ideal for the United States. Again in 1924, this stand was re-affirmed. These are but types of its planks. Although it has been said that the Socialist movement is entitled to be considered the most significant of the minor parties it is stated, with equal truth, that the Socialist-Labor division of this movement "has remained an insignificant factor in the modern political movement of the wage-earning class."[2]

What has been described as the "actual beginning of the Socialist movement in the United States"[3] occurred on June 21, 1897. It has been noted by the author of the above quotation that the organization, known as the Social Democratic Party had been born in one prison and had died in another. The correctness of the second part of that

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[2]Holcombe, A. N. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 325

[3]Karsner, D. -- "The Passing of the Socialist Party" -- Current History -- June 1924.

statement must be doubted for since the publication of that article sufficient proof has been provided to allow us to judge that the time for this party's decease has not yet arrived.

It is true that the birth of the group took place in a prison, for it was not until Eugene V. Debs had been sentenced to imprisonment and had, during this leisure, made a study of modern socialism, that the party was conceived. The name of Debs has been closely connected with the formation and success of the group, so closely, in fact, that it has been termed a one-man organization. Following the name of Debs, as related to this movement, come the names of Victor L. Berger and Morris Hillquit.

The political party that was established by these leaders is, properly speaking, the Social Democratic Party. Commonly is it known simply as the Socialist Party, composed of men of moderate rather than radical views who are sometimes called "opportunists". Since its organization, in 1897, it has made rapid strides and it has provided itself with a positive aim and a program for the economic reconstruction of society.[4] The extreme views of the Social-Labor group was one of the chief reasons for the creation of the new and milder party. In its platforms it has stood for the election of judges, graduated inheritance and income taxes, universal suffrage, proportional repre-

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[4] Ray, P. O. -- Op. Cit -- Pages 53-57

sentation and the right of recall, and the collective ownership of all industries in which competition has ceased. As contrasted with the more radical element, it did not demand the abolition of all private property in the means of production.[5]

The first Presidential nominee of this party, was Eugene V. Debs. He, with the candidate for the Vice-Presidency, ran in the election of 1900 and secured 87,814 votes. The same man headed the Socialist tickets in 1904, 1908, 1912 and 1920. So rapidly did the number of his votes grow in these years it seems worth while to record them. For the campaigns of the four years enumerated the figures were as follows: 402,283; 420,793; 901,873; and 919,799. The campaigns of this party, led by Debs, evidenced a wide and popular spread of its principles and advocates. His vote had grown tremendously, although the number of ballots received by him in 1920 was proportionately smaller than those of 1912. In the campaign between these two dates, that of 1916, the nominee was Allan J. Benson, a New York journalist. His vote dropped to 590,579 and this was due in great measure, to the entering of the World War by the United States. "The opposition of the Socialist Party to the war, against Germany, led to the withdrawal of many prominent leaders. On the other hand, the world-wide reverberation of the Russian Revolution forced the

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[5]Beard, C. A. -- American Government and Politics -- Page 144

remaining officials of the party into a relatively moderate position."[6] These events caused a stiff opposition to Socialism in America, and while Debs was being sent to jail Berger and others excluded from public offices to which they had been elected, and others, such as Heywood, were being deported there had been aroused in the United States a spirited and strong wave of patriotism and fidelity.

The faith in the Socialist Party, which had been diminished at this time, seems never to have been redeemed. The subsequent change of the economic policy of the Soviet government, its tacit acknowledgment of the impracticability of uncompromising collectivism, the success of the British Labor Party, and the formation of the first Labor Ministry at Westminster, all of these occurrences led to a continued lack of interest in the cause of Socialism in this country. The leaders of independent movements were able to perceive the possibilities of a labor movement in American politics and even in the spring of 1924 Debs made known his willingness to consider an alliance between the Socialist Party and a new independent labor party.

In the Presidential election of 1924 the Socialist group refrained from nominating candidates. They voted at the party convention, in July of that Year, to support Senator LaFollette who was running on a combination Independent - Progressive - Socialist ticket. As the candidate of such a

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[6] Beard, C. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 145

merger of groups he obtained a total of 4,822,856 votes. Of course it is impossible to even estimate the number of these ballots which came from the followers of the Socialists. The entire groups of the Socialists did not support this man as the Socialist-Labor element again broke connections and put their own man, Johns, into the field.

Some feel and claim that the climax of the Socialist party's success has been reached. The strategem of 1924 would seem to indicate a confession of the truth of this opinion. Without attempting to decide this point it would be at least helpful to view the situation as it was to be found in 1928. We find the Socialist Party meeting in 39 states sending 171 delegates. As its Presidential nominee, Norman Thomas was chosen and the platform approved and adopted called for the public ownership of all natural resources and public utilities, an old-age pension, a shorter working day, and the abolution of the injunction and convict labor. These were the principal planks although others contained recommendations for an adequate child labor amendment and measures pertaining to treaties to outlaw war and promote disarmament. The question of prohibition was duly considered but finally it was voted to omit the subject from the platform and to hold the Democratic and Republican parties, "responsible for their men".[7]

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[7] "The Socialist Ticket" - Literary Digest - April 28, 1928

In speaking of the duty to strengthen the position of labor and to halt the entrenchment of the power industry the editor of one magazine, in a timely article, calls upon the Socialist vote to elect Smith and thereby accept a real opportunity to forward these immediately necessary objections. His view suggests that while waiting for "a possible opportunity to take a longer step in advance there will be many progressives who will prefer making these short steps rather than casting a vote which can only be an intellectual gesture, or an act of not clearly justified faith."[8] The election returns showed that the nominee of this party received 267,420 popular votes. This was a tremendous decrease from the 919,799 given to Debs in 1920.

From a study of the experiences of the several Socialist parties in this country it is possible to note the following. The theories and principles of the extreme factions are not welcomed by the American workingman, This word "extreme" is used in a relative fashion of the groups that have begun within our borders. In such a class we could include the Socialist-Labor Party and the advocates of communism, syndicalism, or anarchy. The alleged remedies prescribed by such organizations have been refused by the practical and sensible American wage earners. Those bodies and the doctrines which are tinged

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[8] "Progressives and Socialists" - The New Republic - November 7, 1928

with the spirit of the Russian Socialism are not acceptable to the employees of America. The principles of the more moderate group are of greater interest to us. Indeed many of their recommendations have been adopted and have brought relief and comfort to the proletariat. The shorter hours of labor, the raising of the wage scale, the cause of unionism, and the conditions, under which the people work have been some of the results of the Socialists' agitation.

Chapter XI

RECENT TENDENCIES

The study completed in our last chapter brought us up to the Presidential choice which was made by the people in 1924.

Since then a national election took place in 1928. At that time the popular and timely questions of the day were recognized and respected by the two major parties. These issues were not by any means definite and clear-cut but, in general, may be said to have centered about the tariff, the control of the public utilities, farm relief, the conservation of the natural resources, the enforcement of the Prohibition Amendment, and the suppression of the wave of crime and disorder. Hence the need for a third party did not exist. The supporters of the Democratic and Republican Parties had, by means of the stands taken by both of them, sufficient opportunity to register their choice.

There were close to forty million votes cast, and of this number, which was the largest in the history of the country, Hoover and Curtis received over twenty million ballots. The defeated candidates, of the Democratic Party, Smith and Robinson were given a total of fifteen million votes. The vote of the Electoral College was also preponderantly Republican, this party receiving a larger electoral vote than was ever given

to a Presidential candidate. The representatives of this party received a total of 444 votes from forty States, while the remaining States gave 87 votes to Smith and Robinson.

A continuation of this examination would merely be the presentation of further proof of the Republican landslide. Our chief interest is to find out what became of the insurgents and the leaders of the farmer and labor political uprisings. In the choice of Senators we find one Farmer-Labor member among the successful candidates. The House contained two Farmer-Labor members among those newly elected.

We witness Norris of Nebraska and Blaine of Wisconsin casting their lots with Smith, the Democratic candidate. Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., who had succeeded to the cause of his father did not come forward in support of Hoover nor did he declare himself for Smith. Personally he maintained his character as a real independent, but he was outstanding in this respect at this time for, never in the history of the nation was there such a clinging to two major parties and consequently never before were third parties and threatened movements so powerless.

Since the beginning of the Administration of President Hoover there have been repeated instances of stiff opposition from groups within the Republican Party. Now, with half of his term completed and with the preparations for the national election of 1932 there come hints

and signs of the creation of a group whose purpose it will be to prevent a continuation of the present policies of the conservatives. No doubt but that this attempt will be made at the Republican National Convention. If the insurgents are unsuccessful in their efforts then it will remain to be seen what action these progressives will resort to as their most hopeful weapon. It may mean the creation of a new party. Such a thought cannot be ridiculed as idle. Within the first quarter of the present year we have listened to the call from John Dewey, voiced to Senator Norris, and suggesting to the latter that he commence the construction of a new party.

Following the last session of Congress in the early part of March there was held at Washington a conference of the progressive-minded. From their discussions we readily preceive plenty of material out of which the seed of a new party might spring, and by their quoted expressions we learn of the possibility of such a movement. Prohibition, the tariff, the plight of the farmer, and the recent wave of unemployment were the topics which received much consideration.

At this assembly we find the presence of Senators Borah and Norris, Shipstead of Minnesota, Frazier of North Dakota, Thomas of Oklahoma, Brookhart of Iowa, and McGill of Kansas. An equally large and notable group from the House was in attendance, and besides these members of Congress we find leaders of outstanding groups in the

country. President William Green of the American Federation of Labor, President Sydney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the Rev. Father John A. Ryan of the National Catholic Welfare Council, D. B. Robertson, the leader of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers, William Hirth, Missouri, farm paper editor, and Robert P. Scripps of the Scripps-Howard newspapers are but a few of those present. Each of these and the other like leaders have a considerable following and whatever may come of their plans must certainly have a definite bearing upon the parties of the future.

When Borah spoke to the gathering on March 11, 1931, he brought out the fact that 80 per cent of the wealth of this country is in the hands of 4 per cent of the people. "I would not take it from them," he states, "But there ought to be a political party which will worry more about the 96 per cent than the 4 per cent. We have five to seven million people out of work and we have the people in the drought area. They present a serious problem."

Senator Norris at the session held on the twelfth of the month reiterated his belief that he did not think that a third party was feasible now. However, after conceding the Republican renomination of Hoover in 1932, he virtually announced that he would oppose the President as he did in 1928 and said that his own hope for a progressive President lay with the Democratic Party.

"If the Democratic Party wants to win it must nominate a progressive candidate", said Senator Wheeler, "If it nominates a reactionary there will be a third party and that will mean the same result as in 1924".

Senator Brookhart for his part said that a third party might be founded upon a general uprising of the people in protest against present conditions.

The conditions for a revolt are present, the leaders are awake to the opportunity, and it simply remains to learn what tactics are to be adopted by them in their attempt to organize. The history of third parties, so far as direct and immediate successes are concerned, is void of experiences which might encourage the founding of such a new political unit. The other alternative must be to secure a progressive candidate in one of the two major parties and to construct their platform under him. Such a plan is the more simple and the more hopeful. But in the event of their failure to select such a course, shall it mean the appearance of a new third party?

CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Upon reaching this part of our discussion we find that our conclusions necessarily divide themselves into two distinct types. There are those that must be enumerated in reply to the questions, "Why are third parties formed?" and "What purposes do they serve?" Responses to these inquiries have been supplied throughout this work and it will now be our task to arrange and review them.

The second group of conclusions with which we are to deal has to do with the measures and bits of legislation that have been gained on account of the efforts of one or more of the third parties. These are in answer to the questions, "What are the accomplishments of the third parties?" or "Have any worthy results been effected by these organizations?"

As regards our first consideration we have seen that a third party agitation springs into being when a particular group of individuals are capable of arousing within a sufficiently large number of the voters, a desire for some improved condition or a determination to relieve themselves of some practice which suddenly has been made to appear as a yoke of oppression. The longing of the laboring class for better working conditions, an increase in wages, the right to organize, and a general

willingness to support policies that would assist it in its campaign against capital has always supplied an extremely large following to those who have fostered a Labor party. With the ideal of an improved condition before their eyes and with the thought of having their representatives taking a part in the control of the nation, the wage earners have provided fertile soil for the formation of a party of their own such as the Labor Reform party of 1872. When not so organized into a distinct unit the labor vote has been linked with the interests of other groups. We have found, for example, instances of alliances between the Greenback party and the Labor forces and also between the latter group and the Farm faction in the campaign of 1920. Throughout the entire life of both branches of the Socialist movement we have found the appeal to the wage earners. The Socialist-Labor party has consistently been making its radical overtures to the working people. Such situations provide encouragement and practical help to the leaders who oftentimes are most sincere in their determination to head a movement which has for its purpose a just and improved condition for its members. Such situations likewise attract the outcast, the exiled member of one of the major parties. He has lost his position and his prestige in the larger body and as a means of regaining his standing he hastens the formation of the new party in which he is to take a leading part.

Hence it is their desire and ambition that is

flashed before the eyes of a large faction of the population and which causes them to unite in order to achieve their purpose. The thought of the alcohol evil, pictured as a demon, was a strong weapon of the Prohibitionists. Its cause was recognized as noble, and the ideal situation of a country, rid of liquor and its consequent evils, was attractive to many voters. The condition of the country under the Grant Administration provided opportunity for the efforts of those who would sound the signal for reform. The platform of the Liberal Republicans charged the Administration with a wanton disregard of the laws of the land, the use of the Presidential powers for the promotion of personal ends, the hindering of necessary investigations and indispensable reforms, and keeping alive the passions and resentments of the late Civil War. These, and many others of a like nature, were of the stuff that arouses a goodly number of the people and causes them to demand a change in policies by the present party or a change in party. The agricultural interests of the country were banded into a political unit because of the fear aroused by the growing forces of industry. The favors extended to the railroads and to the manufacturing interests caused alarm to the rural population. Deliverance from a monopoly maintained by these groups was sought and fought for by the people of the farm states. The Granger movement was conceived and strengthened by the desire on the part of the farmer to obtain his ideal, namely, a condition wherein he would be free to work his land

profitably and unmolested by the excesses placed upon him by the rise of industries and the spread of railroads. Thus the farmers of the country have, singly, or jointly with other groups, supplied material for the creation of minor parties.

A similar urge was responsible for the establishment of the Greenback party. Limited and vexed by the alleged insufficiency of currency in circulation, resort was had to the formation of a political body which felt that its proposed principles would afford an ample remedy for the evil complained of.

In this fashion is a third party born; started by a thought and a hope to obtain some utopian scheme by which the ills of the afflicted might be cured without causing concurrent injury to others. The wave of interest and support is upheld by the search for an ideal and it is the presence of this frequently impractical and speculative basis which accounts for the short life of such movements. This character of the third parties,- "has helped to popularize the idea that a 'third party' is always utopian, and that a man of good sense joins one or other of the regular parties."[1]

The third party has been seen to live only as long as its particular ideal. If the ideal has been realized either because of the direct efforts of the organization or

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[1] Ostrogotski, M. -- Democracy and the Party System in the United States - - Page 304

by reason of its pet policy having been recognized and adopted by a major party then the work of the minor party ceases. On the other hand, if its proposals are too idealistic or far too impractical for acceptance by the voters then defeat is inevitable and the energy of the party is of no avail even though this energy may be spent over several national campaigns. Our study discloses examples of both manners in which third party movements have been terminated. We have seen that the demand for the regulation of railroads was a vital plank of the Granger party. The restoration of the public lands to actual settlers and the prevention of monopolies were but two of the planks of the platform of the Democratic party in 1884. The chief complaints of the farmers were respected by a major organization and with the policy receiving the attention and support of this body the greater part of the farmer's work, as a separate unit, was completed. The Liberal Republicans of 1872, led on by the worthy desire to purge their own organization of corruption, felt that their work was done, for the time being, and those of the more liberal tendencies fused with the Democratic party while the more conservative balance returned to the ranks of the Republicans. These latter members constituted the beginning of a liberal element in the Republican party, a faction within a party, which has influenced the greater organization and which seceded itself in 1912 and in 1924 when the parent party was judged as too conservative.

The patience and persistence of the Prohibition party allows it to be known as the oldest of all the third parties. The evil against which it levelled its attack was growing and the suffering was spreading to the great disgust of all. Now that the passage of legislation relating to the prohibition of intoxicating liquors has been gained, it would seem that its objective had been attained. We have seen that since the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment, the party has convened and named candidates but the small number of votes given to these candidates clearly indicates that the electorate has linked the party with the cause.

The work of the Prohibition political machine has been completed. Its chief issue has been passed on to the major parties although from their treatment of the question thus far it is clear that they accept it reluctantly. This instance offers an excellent example of a major party being forced to consider a question that has been fostered and sponsored by a minor body.

The interest and work of the Greenback party centered around the question of currency and the monetary standard. This was a vital issue and the function of the party was finished when the very important matter was taken up by both of the major parties. However, as we have seen, the Greenback party itself had accomplished much even before the issue was taken over by the Democratic and Republican groups.

Thus may we cite illustrations of those organizations which have arisen, flourished, and forced their issues into the

platforms of the larger political bodies. Of the other type, namely, those parties that have been created, only to pass away quickly because no welcome or response is extended to their doctrines, we can find fewer examples. One reason for this inability is the fact that in our work we have not intended to consider each isolated and weak movement that has been started on some languid and extreme theory. Of those parties that we have studied, the Socialist-Labor group seems to come within this division. Although it has been, in fact, but a radical branch of the larger Socialist body still it has asserted its independence by holding its own conventions and by nominating its separate candidates. The size of its vote has always been disregarded and it seems to be an indication that the American working man, who is ever ready to better his condition, recognizes, in the promises of this group, nothing that can be of assistance to him. He seems to be able to judge that the conditions, as pictured and advocated, are to be gained at too great a sacrifice of those blessings which he now enjoys under his present order.

James B. Walker was nominated in 1875 by the American National party, an organization which made no figure in the campaign and which did not appear again in subsequent elections. The prominent principles upon which it established itself, apart from direct vote for President and a plank condemning monopolies, were chiefly concerned with moral matters, such as temperance, the protection of the Sabbath, and the abolition of secret societies. A few fragments of

this body, under the name of the American party, held conventions for the elections of 1880, 1884 and 1888. The platforms were similar to the one noted above and on all occasions showed that no interest in the issues was forthcoming. Several other weak parties, that made appearances in the national campaigns, may be mentioned. However it must be added that practically all of these groups represented discontented elements of minor parties already in existence. It is found that they differed greatly on one or two planks and because of the failure to reconcile the varying views they withdrew and set up separate organizations. Therefore the small number of votes claimed by those bodies is explained, to a great extent, by pointing out that their platforms were substantially the same as the parent organization. After the particular election the seceding faction usually returned to the fold. In 1888 two distinct Labor parties held national conventions. One was the Union Labor party and the other was called the United Labor party. These were the two means by which attempts were made, at that time, to attract the votes of the working class. Neither group was successful, the Presidential nominee of the former party obtaining but 146,935 votes while Cowdrey, the candidate of the latter organization, received only 2,418 ballots.

With the approval of the conventions of 1896 came a time of "splits" and "bolts" in the parties. The cause of the inharmonious assemblies was the silver question. The Democrats broke up into the Gold Democrats and the Silver Democrats.

The Republican party was similarly divided and the factions were similarly labeled. The Prohibition party resolved itself into two factions, the "narrow gaugers" and the "broad gaugers". The latter group, later terming itself the National party, placed its own candidate in the field. The multiplicity of minor parties continued through the election of 1900. At this time we witness a break in the forces of the Populists. It resulted in the creation of the Middle-of-the-Road Populists who refused to join with the balance of the older party in supporting Mr. Bryan who was sure to be named as the Democratic party's choice for president. The Union Reform party also had a nominee on the ticket at this time. Its platform consisted of but one plank and it called for the adoption of the initiative and referendum. Likewise do we note the presence of the United Christian party which based the planks of its platform upon the principle of moral reform. Coming to more recent time we need merely mention, as illustrations of the same kind of minor parties, the Single Tax party of 1920, the Workers' Party of America in 1924, and the Workers' (Communist) Party of 1928. All of these political bodies were in existence for but a short time and their doctrines were not attractive to the voters either because they were already contained in the platform of the older and larger parties or because they possessed no appeal.

Before completing our consideration of the reason for the creation and success or failure of a third party it will be of value to include a brief account of the manner in

which a successful minor group grows. The agitation is limited to a state or to a small section of the country in the beginning. When the condition complained of becomes so damaging to one group as to make their suffering affect a larger group then the cry for the desired relief spreads farther and becomes louder. Thus when the farmers of the western states began to feel the excessive rates of the railroads and when the purchasing power of their commodities were reduced to an unfair scale their interest in modification by political means took a definite form. The associations of farmers were formed, the co-operative buying clubs were organized and the protective groups sprung up. Under different names these units became established and when their common interest became mutually known, a consolidation of force was possible. The Patrons of Husbandry was a secret order which occupied itself in the farmers' behalf in the State of Washington. This group provided the seed from which grew the National Grange of Patrons of Husbandry, an organization that has voiced the opinion of the farmer and that has championed the measures that have resulted in benefits to him.

When the Republican party in Missouri split into two parts, in 1870, there was stimulated within the ranks of the National body a feeling of rebellion against the conservative policies of this party. When the state was carried by the "liberal" wing, assisted by the Democrats, the agitation took on some importance and during the summer of 1871 it

continued to develop within the Republican party. The power of the resulting force has been treated in an earlier chapter. The strong Greenback movement was the result of objections strenuously made in several of the states. The plan of "Gentleman George" Pendleton vitalized the greenback issue, and, at first, caused it to become a very important one in many of the states. On its account there was brought about the election of Democratic Governors and Democratic Legislatures in Maine and Ohio. Later we find it concerned with national politics with presidential nominees elected in 1880, 1884, and 1888.

It is easy to understand how the several movements have started in a certain and limited section. The importance of labor would naturally be stressed and championed in those states wherein industry had been established and where the lot of the workman needed protection. The communities of the South and of the West, where the population depended upon the soil for its support, would necessarily oppose any measure which threatened their livelihood. When any single group became so oppressed as to affect some other group then the second body would understand and appreciate the burdens of the sufferers. When this interest became deep and sufficiently strong, organization resulted, alliances were formed, and adequate strength was sought in order to combat the harm complained of.

We have made some attempt to ascertain why third parties have been formed. In a small way we have viewed

the manner of the process, and we have endeavored to supply an explanation concerning the general outcomes of these groups. The reasons for their organization are complex indeed and a remote condition may render the most worthy party useless and weak. The increase in the standards of living, brought about by the operation of an economic law, may remove the reason for the existence of a certain movement at a particular time. The discovery of new deposits of gold and the increase in the circulation of this metal, by this fact, had much to do with the failure of Mr. Bryan and his party. The condition in Russia and in other parts of the world has been responsible, no doubt, for the decrease of interest in the Socialist. People are wont to judge Socialism by the suffering in these other countries even though the principles of the Socialist and the Communist are not identical either in nature or in degree.

It may be noted, however, that the energy of these third party movements has been well spent. We have seen the appearance, disappearance and re-appearance of these groups and, although none of them may be pointed out as a numerically victorious party, still it is possible to attribute to a great many of them due credit for the improvement of some phase of our national life.

An enumeration of some benefits resulting from the efforts of third party movements brings us to the second group of our conclusions. These are intended to satisfy our inquiry as to just what the accomplishments of the minor movements have been.

At the outset we must stress the fact that the many and practical reforms have, in most cases, resulted from the concerted and collective energy of several of the third parties. Many of these groups have had like stands on similar issues and it was the combined and continued pressure of them all that brought about the adoption of the improvements. This being so, then it seems wiser that, in this part of our conclusion, we treat of the issues and make mention of the influence that any of the third parties may have had thereon. This will allow us to follow the growth and success of the proposed policy. To list each party and its results independently would necessitate the weaving of a final picture to which there would still remain many loose threads.

From the days of Andrew Jackson, in 1829, to the passage of the Pendleton Act in 1883, the question of Civil Service reform was demanding the interest of the electorate. We find that many of the third parties that sprang up within the period which we have considered have grasped this issue as a most vital and successful one. The plank demanding such reform was included in each national platform of the major parties but its contents and promises were continuously disregarded. Subsequent to the election of Grant conditions became worse and positions were parceled out with no regard for merit. The Liberal Republicans assailed this practice and the opposition was recognized by the creation of the Civil Service Commission. This body failed to

function because of the lack of a sufficient appropriation. During the campaigns of the Farmers' and Greenback movements, and all through the life of the Prohibition party, the question received attention. At the same time public opinion was being influenced by the publicity supplied by these groups. With the assassination of Garfield came the climax for in 1883 the Pendleton Act was debated, passed, and approved.

It has been the part of third parties to counter the threatened onslaughts of monopolies. The chief complaint of the farmers of the country, beginning in about the year 1874, was the control that was being gained by the railroads as they extended into the new West. The high freight rates of the Western railroads aroused the Grangers and led to several unsuccessful attempts to induce Congress to pass transportation laws for the regulation of inter-State commerce and freight rates. At the convention of the Greenback-Labor party in Chicago in 1880 a plank of their platform condemned the grants of lands to railroads. The nominee of this group, James B. Weaver, included in his speech of acceptance a desire for the "rigid regulation of interstate commerce and transportation" as a means of bringing the producer and the consumer together. At the convention of the Democratic organization in 1884 a "railroad regulation" plank was adopted. The issue was forcing itself before the voters. Definite results followed and in 1887 the Interstate Commerce Act was passed. By no means did this act afford a complete remedy for the pressing problems. Since its original enactment it

has been frequently amended and broadened so that at the present time the Interstate Commerce Commission has jurisdiction over carriers of all classes. The Populist party, created for the benefit of the common people, and really growing out of the Greenback movement and the Farmers' Alliances, set itself in opposition to the powerful railroads. When its delegates convened at Omaha in 1892, government ownership of railroads, telegraphs, and telephones was set forth. It continued the struggle of the Farmers and it was during the period of the Populist party's strength that the disastrous railroad strikes occurred. Again, during the reign of the Progressives we find many improvements, amendments to the Commerce Act which were bitterly fought by the railroads. In 1906 there was established a Commerce Court, and at the same time the powers of the Commission were broadened. By virtue of the Mann-Elkins Railway law of 1910 still greater authority was granted to this same board. In December, 1917, the government took over the operation of the railroads for the duration of the World War. They have since been returned, but at the present time are closely supervised and managed under the direction of this Commission which resulted from the demands of minor parties.

It is the comment of critics that the objective of both major parties of the United States is to win the election and to gain the administration of the government. The popular and vital issues concern these parties but little and they are reluctant to even consider them, much less to take stands

thereon, unless and until they are forced to. When the question becomes sufficiently strong and it demands recognition, then, for a time, the determination to win, which had solely motivated the party, begins to lose its significance. In the year 1896 a good example of this unusual condition was to be found. Then we found practically all parties, the major as well as the minor, divided on the question of the free coinage of silver. This is one more issue that was alive to the ordinary people of the nation and it was one that had been taken up and fostered originally by the minor groups. The entire philosophy of the Greenback faction of the Greenback-Labor party was founded upon this diminishing and deflated currency. We have considered its history and we need but mention the fact here. The work of the Greenbackers was carried on by the Populists and the peak of interest and conflict came in the year 1896. Even at this time something in behalf of those who clamored for more money to be put into circulation had been achieved by the passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Law. This measure was, in fact, a concession by Republicans that "something ought to be done for silver". Its existence was but short as in 1893 it was repealed.

When speaking on the subject of the Federal Income Tax, Haynes says, "The income-tax was a Populist demand and 'may justly be called a mighty manifestation of the working of Populist leaven. So great a third party triumph as the

acceptance by the dominant party of this income-tax demand, is almost without a parallel'."[3] This is convincing testimony relating to the accomplishments of third parties. We may note that several of the minor parties preceding the Populists had incorporated such a plank in their platforms. When the income tax decision had come down from the Supreme Court it was denounced by the leaders and the followers of the Populist group.

The Prohibitionists, the Greenback party, the Union-Labor party, the short-lived Anti-Monopoly group of 1884, and practically all other minor bodies had called for the graduated income tax. Finally in 1894 an act was passed only to be held unconstitutional, as stated above, in 1895 when the case of Pollock v. The Farmers' Loan & Trust Co. was handed down. With the election of Woodrow Wilson as President in 1912 and with his choice of Bryan as his chief cabinet officer we arrive at the passage of legislation calling for the income tax. This enactment constituted the Sixteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution.

Closely related in time to the ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment was the passage of the Seventeenth Amendment. This latter legislation provided for the direct election of United States Senators, and we must include it here because it had been an issue that the smaller parties had been forcing strongly and regularly. This question had been decided

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[3] Haynes, F. E. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 279

by all of the parties that we have examined and invariably they called for the election of the Senators by popular vote. This stand was to be found in the platforms of the Grangers, the Greenbackers, the Nationalists, the Union Labor party, the United Christians and the Populists. This last-named body made a party issue of the proposal in 1892 and to this group much credit for the success of the measure is due.

At about the time that the alliance was negotiated between the Labor interests and the Greenbackers we detect definite signs of a demand for the establishment of bureaus of labor by the state and national governments. In 1913 the Department of Labor was created with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet. The recognition of the power of the dwellers and workers in the rural sections took a similar form. It consisted of the establishment of the Department of Agriculture in response to the insistent demands of the farmers. Democracy was increasing and spreading and the rights of the masses were given due representation and recognition. It was, however, only after these people had notified those governing by means of the choice of a party. Finding that the existing parties did not meet the requirements of those desiring relief then the latter have, as we have seen, made up new parties that were formed for their purposes.

During the Administration of President Taft we witnessed the founding of the Postal Savings Banks. This system was but another answer to the request of the Populist

insurgents who had set themselves on record for such a scheme together with a national currency. Hearkening back to an earlier date we may recall that the Connecticut Greenbackers, typical of their kind, demanded that "the Government at once establish postal savings banks, for the purpose of receiving deposits by the people for safe keeping, and loaning money to the people, on ample security, at a rate of interest not exceeding the actual expense of creating and loaning the same".

We have noticed that the platforms of the third parties regularly fostered the betterment of the workingman. Labor legislation of the wage earner was at least receiving attention. Apart from direct means by which to improve his lot, the worker was also concerned with attempts to diminish the power of the capitalist. We do not find very many definite steps in this direction, but during the era of the Progressive movement we view a very strong period of so-called trust-busting. Led on by Roosevelt, there were many prosecutions under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and the cases against the Northern Securities group and the Standard Oil combination are reminders of his attacks upon the monopolies. No other third party may claim equal credit for such work, although we usually find anti-monopoly planks in the platforms of them all. We very seldom witness attempts by them to enforce these principles, and they seemed more inclined to strengthen the position of union labor rather than

to make assaults upon the apparent security of the capitalists.

We have spoken of five or six important matters which have resulted from or at least have been hastened by the rise of one or more third parties. These have dealt very vitally with the interests of the average American citizen. We repeat that these third parties are not to be thanked wholly and solely for these advantages. Assuming that the work of these movements was but minutely responsible for these results, I think that we must conclude that valuable contributions have been made. There are other matters which the third parties have urged but which have not materialized as yet. Perhaps they are unsound in fact, or perhaps the time for their acceptance has not arrived. Acknowledging that many promises of the third parties have remained unfulfilled, and judging the movements in the light of all that they hoped for, I believe that adequate results have been shown to justify their creation.

There are other phases of our daily lives which have been favorably affected by the exertion of the third parties, and in closing I desire to merely mention a few of them. The founding of the Parcel Post system has proved to be one of the most successful undertakings of the government. The settlement of the monetary question with the establishment of the Federal Reserve Bank has brought stability and soundness to our banking system. The restriction on the number of immigrants allowed to enter within our borders has been

of economic value to the people of this country. The handling of the tariff question is of great importance to the American producers and consumers. All of these issues have been the topics of discussion at the time of the formation of third parties, and the recognition granted by the major parties has often been caused and always forced by the interest and enthusiasm of these progressive elements.

We have learned that the third parties exist "for those who wish to educate, to call attention to a cause, to cast a vote of protest against the situation".[4] We have also learned that those so voting do educate, have called attention to causes, and have cast profitable votes against unsatisfactory situations.

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[4] Woodburn, J. A. -- Op. Cit. -- Page 244

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